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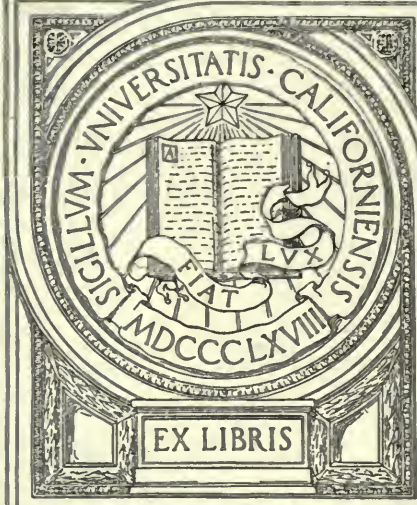

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THE

WORKS

OF

SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

SOMETIME BISHOP OF ELY.

INCLUDING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

EDITED BY

THE REV. ALEXANDER TAYLOR, M.A.

MICHEL FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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JEWISH HYPOCRISY,

A CAVEAT

TO

THE PRESENT GENERATION.

WHEREIN IS SHOWN BOTH THE FALSE AND THE TRUE WAY TO A NATION'S OR PERSON'S COMPLETE HAPPINESS, FROM THE SICKNESS AND RECOVERY OF THE JEWISH STATE.

UNTO WHICH IS ADDED A DISCOURSE UPON MICAH VI. 8, BELONGING TO THE SAME MATTER.

LUKE xii. 1.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

Τὸ σύνολον ἐκείνου μεμνῆσθαι, ὅτι ἐὰν μὴ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ᾖ τὸ εὐσεβὲς καὶ συμφέρον, οὐ δύναται σωθῆναι τὸ εὐσεβὲς ἐν τίνι.

'Remember it, you can never preserve godliness, unless godliness and gain be the same in your account.' Arrian Epict. l. i. cap. 27. [p. 153.]

TO THE HONOURABLE

SIR WALTER ST. JOHN, BARONET,

AND THE

LADY JOHANNA ST. JOHN, HIS WIFE,

ALL HAPPINESS.

THIS small labour, to which as well your love to me, and to the truths herein contained, as my great engagements and no less affections to you have long since entitled you, doth humbly put itself into your hands, and craves the acceptance of that which is so many ways your own. If I were capable of making any other returns to you for your favours, yet (since they would be all so inconsiderable) I could not pardon myself so great an injustice, as the not presenting you with this would seem to be: but seeing I despair of doing any thing else, I could not justly expect to find a pardon from you, if I had denied you this poor acknowledgment.

It is true indeed that you expect neither this nor any other requital of your kindnesses; but all my services are the more due to you, because you expect none at all.

I have detained you so long in some former addresses, that I shall be the shorter in this; and only acquaint you that this treatise was intended for a remedy of those evils, under which we, in these kingdoms, long groaned: but now, by reason that our deliverance from our oppressions was so speedy, and its delivery from the press so slow, it must serve as a preservative from the like mischiefs in time to come. I know it shall not want your prayers to assist it in the effecting of its design, which is the advancement of unfeigned and impartial godliness in the hearts of those that read it. This only can make his majesty glorious, and his kingdoms happy (both which,

I know, none can wish more heartily than yourselves). This should employ all our thoughts, and engage all our endeavours, and be the sum of all our prayers : and to the promoting of this, I hope that I shall always bend all my studies, and therein approve myself to you, above all others,

Your most affectionate

Friend and servant,

SYMON PATRICK.

TO THE SERIOUS READER.

It is not much above three years since a Sermon of mine was published by a good friend now with God[a], containing many of those things which you will meet with in the first part of this treatise, which I put into your hands. It was judged useful by a very discerning person that the Sermon should receive some enlargements, and be made more comprehensive: by whose advice and counsel I have been ruled to bring it into the form you now see, attended with such additions as might more fully describe the several kinds of false godliness that are among us. I am no prophet, but yet I can foresee that I must not expect any other readers than you; for they who love rather to talk of the Bible than to understand it, and can content themselves with some ends and shreds of it to make their speech relish of Scripture phrase, will lay these things aside as dry and dull discourses. But I have the confidence to invite those whose understandings are advanced to any manly thoughts, and have a mind to be acquainted with the counsels of God, to a perusal of them; and hope that they will be not only acceptable, but delightful to their meditation. And if they meet with any thing that is not for their present gust, I desire them that they would notwithstanding read on to the conclusion, and by that time I may have converted their palate to another taste.

I cannot but wish that this Treatise may have as many readers as many books of little significancy and use are observed to have. With which wish I am not inspired by vain ambition, and desire of popular applause, but by a great sense which I feel myself possessed withal

[a] [The title of the Sermon in question, Patrick's earliest published work, is "The Hypocritical Nation described, in a sermon preached at St. Maries in Cambridge, upon a day of public Fasting; with an epistle prefixed by Mr. Samuel Jacombe." 4to. Lond. 1657. To this an epistle was prefixed by the Author, subscribed by him Ric. Patius, the real authorship of which was thus transparently disguised under an anagram upon the Latinized form of his name Patricius.]

of the weight and importance of those truths which are here discoursed. But it is no more than a wish; for I know the hearts of men are full of these things that I here speak against, and the world hath so many things for them to do, that it will not give them time to be serious. If any shallow and superficial discourse be presented to them, which shall only bid them believe, and then shall comfort them with the privileges of the saints, it will go down easily, and needs but little chewing. But that which searches deep, especially so low as the heart, and tends to the mortifying of all carnal affections and passions that there are, is too laborious, and too unpleasing also for them to meddle withal.

I shall not tell you how much I believed that which is now come to pass in this kingdom, when I conceived (a great while ago) these meditations, because my private thoughts are not so considerable as that they should be communicated to the world. Nor will I add any thing more by way of preface, but only these three short advertisements. First, that the reason of some sad complaints that you will meet withal in the discourse is, because it was all written (except the last chapter) before the king's majesty was happily restored to his hereditary dominions. And secondly, that I have written most against that sort of hypocrisy which was in fashion, and least against that which was worn out of date, which none will judge to be partiality in me, but Christian charity, which bestows most of its labours where there is most need. And thirdly, that the sermon annexed was thought fit merely for kindred's sake to bear these papers company. But they are not more of kin to each other than both of them are to your souls; and therefore let me say to every one as Solomon doth, *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister: and call understanding thy kinswoman*[b]. *So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man*[c].

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

SYMON PATRICK.

BATTERSEA, May 12, 1660.

[b] Prov. vii. 3, 4. [c] iii. 4.

JEWISH HYPOCRISY;

A

CAVEAT TO THE PRESENT GENERATION.

CHAP. I.

1. *Sin is a madness which undoes us, and yet pleases us till wē come to ourselves.* 2. *All men are miserable sick of it when they see it.* 3. *But there are many bad physicians.* 4. *And most are unwilling to be thoroughly healed.* 5. *And many take that for healing which doth but feed the disease.* 6. *Witness to all this our own nation.* 7. *The way proposed for finding out a remedy for us.*

1. IT is the common acknowledgment of all sober persons, that sin is the sickness, or the ill habit of our souls. And the great Hippocrates, who understood the distempers of the mind as well as of the body, thinks that this sickness is but of one kind, and may be called, 'a violent madness strangely distracting the reason from the true use of itself, by fond opinions and absurd fancies that impose upon it[a].' In this frantic state men give so many fatal strokes to their own immortal souls, that it grieves all men who are not in the like manner alienated from themselves, to see the blood of them so barbarously spilt, and so many silly creatures perishing by their own hands. But the sinners in the meantime are tickled with their own life-blood, and laugh as madmen do when they are making away with themselves, till their reasons can be delivered from the impostures of those carnal imaginations that, like so many

[a] Οἶμαι δὲ ἔγωγε καὶ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς νοσήματα πάντα μανίας εἶναι σφοδρὰς, ἐμποιούσας δόξας τινὰς καὶ φαντασίας τῷ λογισμῷ· ὧν ὁ δι' ἀρετῆς ἀποκαθαρθεὶς ὑγιάζεται. Hippocr. in Epist. ad Senat. Abder. [tom. iii. p. 780.]

devils, have got possession of them. As a man that is in an hot pursuit of his desired conquests and spoils doth not feel the smart of his wounds till he come to be cold, and have the spirits settled in his blood; so is it with a sinner, who perceives not the wide breaches and the gaping wounds that sin makes in his soul, nor complains of any grief and pain that it creates him, while he is in an eager chase of his beloved lusts, till he hath done his fierce pursuit, and in cool thoughts quietly reflects upon his folly. And when he is (as we say) in his cold blood, not enraged with his passions, nor pricked forward by the heat of his burning affections, he sees that every sin which he committed gave a slash to his soul, and opened a door to let out his precious life. Then, as the wounded man calls for a chirurgeon, and is as impatient for something to lenify and assuage the pricking of his sore, as before he was to run into the encounter; so is the sinner desirous that some applications may be made for his cure, and that some balsam may be found out for to give him healing, which will be more grateful to him than all the pleasures of his sinful enjoyments.

2. All this you may easily see verified, not only in particular persons, but in whole nations. When Judah *inflamed themselves with idols*[b], and was so *mad* upon them (as another prophet saith of Babylon[c]) that they burnt with filthy desires after those spiritual adulteries, *and debased themselves even unto hell*[d]; it was but a sport unto them, and they considered not of what a deadly disease they laboured. As Tholosanus[e] calls a disease *dissolutio fœderis in corpore*, 'the dissolution of the covenant or agreement that is in the body,' the setting of the parts at odds one with another; so we may say of all sin, but especially of idolatry, that it is a breach of the peace with God, a renouncing of the covenant that is between us, a proclaiming of open war with Heaven. And yet for all this, those mad sinners used to *cry Peace, peace,* to themselves (as the prophets frequently tell us), *when there was no peace* at all. Though they had quite *wearied themselves in the greatness of their way, yet they said not, There is no hope*[f]: i. e. by fol-

[b] Isa. lvii. 5.
[c] Jer. l. 38.
[d] Isa. lvii. 9.
[e] [Petrus Gregorius Tholosanus, tom. ii. Syntaxeωn artis mirabilis, lib. xxviii. cap. 1 p. 478.]
[f] Ver. 10.

lowing so many lovers they were become like an harlot, *lassata sed non satiata*[g]; 'tired, but not satisfied.' They did not say (as the vulgar Latin renders it) *Quiescam*, 'I will rest,' I will cease all this toil and labour whereby comes no good, but much hurt to me. But when God had let them blood, to take down their inflammation, and made them feel the smart of their sins by many sharp judgments, then they began to *roar like bears, and to mourn sore like doves;* then they said, *their transgressions were with them, and as for their iniquities, they did know them,* as you may read in Isa. lix. 11, 12. When *the whole head was sick, and the whole heart was faint,* when there was as many sores as parts, and their body was one great wound[h], then they cry as so many lazars for the balm of Gilead, and say with Jeremy, *Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved*[i].

3. But as there are many mountebanks that pretend at a twopenny charge to give sovereign balsams for all wounds, and for as much more to cure I know not how many desperate diseases; so are there physicians of no value, that undertake the cure of sick souls by merry company, pleasant books, fasting from their sins for a day or two, or by some such trifle; and to restore the collapsed strength of a sick nation by their politic receipts, their changes of government, their craft in managing affairs, and an hundred such little and feeble devices.

4. Now when both the one and the other see that these are but delusive ways of continuing our maladies, then they begin to ask after the method of the great Physician, and to inquire what God would have them do that they may be healed. But then, as most men would be willingly healed of their wounds without any searching or lancing of them, and are contented if they be palliated and skinned over, though they will break out again, either there or in some other place; and as they are for outward applications, but cannot imagine that the cleansing of the inward parts by purging physic to carry away bad humours should conduce much to a cure; so likewise it is with sinful men: they are loath to have their hearts thoroughly searched, and such severe and sharp medicines that will eat away all the dead flesh, all their base lusts and desires, applied; but they love smooth and oily things, that will mitigate the

[g] [Juv. Sat. vi. 130.] [h] Isa. i. 5, 6. [i] Jer. xvii. 14.

pains and assuage the grief, and flatter them into a mere conceit of a cure. They would not have the inward and more latent cause removed, nor the foulness of their souls meddled withal; but they content themselves with an outward amendment, and desire only that the lips of their wound may be closed, that they may not cry out against them. A plaister of the blood of Christ they can well like, that shall be clapped upon their sore, and cool the rage and anger of their conscience; but to be purified and refined by the spirit of burning and judgment, is a way of healing that they are not willing to submit unto. They would have a robe of Christ's righteousness cast over them, that should hide the rottenness and putrefaction of their wounds; but his righteousness in them, which should recover their health and restore them to soundness, is a thing far from their desires, if not from their thoughts.

5. But supposing that men are willing to undergo any thing for a cure, and fall into the hands of honest physicians also, yet it is possible that they may not understand the whole cause of the distemper, and so apply but imperfect remedies, and administer medicines proper but for one particular effect: by which means the disease may not only continue, but be increased, and turn into a worse. For so it happens to many souls, who begin to think their condition is very bad, and resolve for to amend; they are put upon the practice of some religious duties, and are followed most with such advices that make them think these are sufficient to work their amendment. They easily imagine, that if they can but weep when they pray or hear a sermon, those tears have a rare faculty to wash, supple, and cleanse all their sinful wounds. But while they use not all Christ's prescriptions, they fall into a more dangerous distemper, and the hardest of all to be cured. The sore eats deeper, the heart becomes rotten and unsound, and makes a man to labour with hypocrisy, of which few do ever recover. And so it is likewise with politic bodies, the corruptions which seem most notorious in the eyes of the present governors are commonly lamented, and in some degree reformed, but then under the comfortable shadow of that reformation a thousand other sins walk securely, and enjoy their freedom and protection from having any hands laid upon them.

6. The state of our nation is at present so very sick an weak, and so desirous now we are of a cure, and yet so willing to have our hurt healed slightly, that the most ordinary understanding can apply what hath been said unto its case and condition. Our sins have brought us down under a great number of diseases, and laid us upon a bed of affliction. Great gaps are made in our body, our bones are broken and sore vexed; the last drop of our vital blood is ready to issue forth. If I should but represent to you how the treasures of the nation are exhausted, (which statesmen call its blood and spirits,) it would make any heart ache, to see how pale and wan we look, without any colour in our cheeks. But besides that trading is dead, justice also is sore maimed; charity and love is broken, piety is dismembered, the very frame of our government is dissolved, and a whole deluge of miseries threaten to flow in at these wide breaches. *Long have we looked for peace, but no good comes; and for a time of health, but behold trouble. Is there no balm* for such wounds as ours? *Is there no physician* in the English nation? Why then is not the *health* of it before this time *recovered*[k]?

Whether we have not tampered too much with state-doctors, who sought by mere power and worldly policy to settle our discomposures, I leave to every serious man to consider. And whether we have not been backward to take the advice of our spiritual physicians, and to follow their directions, is a thing that may be soon determined. That which I shall inquire into shall be this, whether, even among the spiritual physicians, some have not been sought unto who considered not the chief cause of our maladies, but applied those things most unto us which did accidentally feed our diseases, and make them to be more dangerous. And so we shall find out what will completely remedy all our evils, and restore us to an healthy constitution again.

7. Now in this matter I know not how to take a better course than to imitate physicians, who consult not mere reason, but likewise the experience of former times. And where they find the same symptoms, and all indications of a disease, which an exact author hath described, though many hundred years

[k] Jer. viii. 15, 22.

ago, they conclude the same remedies and medicines are to be used, which are consigned to them by his *probatum est.* I shall therefore search into the records of divine history, and observe what the state of the Jews used to be, and what method they were wont to take for the healing of their nation, when any public calamity did befall them; and as physicians truly say, *Curatio indicat morbum;* by their cure we shall certainly know what their disease was, and give a guess also at our own both disease and remedy. But many ineffectual applications there were, which the holy writ takes notice of, and therefore I shall divide my discourse into two parts, and first show you what things were not of sufficient virtue to cure them, though otherwise they were good and healing. And secondly, what God did particularly direct them unto for a perfect recovery of their strength when it was decayed, and a binding up of their wounds when they were sorely broken.

CHAP. II.

1. *The seventh of Zachary opened, with many other Scriptures which show the grounds of their appointing fasts.* 2. *God's slighting of them.* 3. *Which discovers this was one of the ineffectual courses they took to appease him, though they were very ceremonious in this performance.* 4. *Under which mistake the world still labours.* 5. *The true ends and uses of fasting are discoursed of, in regard to the time past.* 6. *And to the time to come.* 7. *And to the time present.* 8. *Which we ought seriously to mind.*

And you shall find both the one and the other of these insisted upon in the seventh chapter of the prophet Zachary, out of which I will take the foundation and groundwork of my ensuing discourse. For the understanding of which, you must remember how God for their sins had *forsaken his house, and left his heritage, and given the dearly beloved of his soul into the hand of their enemies,* as Jeremiah speaks, chap. xii. 7. These enemies were the Chaldæans, whose prince Nebuchadnezzar God had raised up for to destroy many nations, and

among the rest Judæa; the people of which he carried captive unto Babylon, after he had burnt their chief city, and the temple of the Lord with fire. In consideration of which calamities, those captives appointed certain fasts to be kept at some set times in the year, both as sad commemorations of the ruin that God had brought by sundry steps upon them, and as a means to atone him, and procure his return to them. In the law of Moses we read but of one fast commanded by God to his people, which was in the same month with one of these that I am going to mention, viz. *on the tenth day of the seventh month,* as you may find Lev. xvi. 29, 31; Lev. xxiii. 27, &c. This is the time mentioned by St. Luke, when he saith, *the fast was past*[1], and so sailing was become dangerous, i. e. it was about that time that we call Michaelmas, when great flaws use to be upon the seas, which makes them rough and tempestuous. It is called by Philo[m] ἑορτὴ νηστείας, 'the feast of the fast,' and the Sabbath of Sabbaths. The neglect, or rather hypocritical observance of which Sabbath, or day of rest, is reproved very sharply in Isaiah lviii., through the whole chapter. Where by *Sabbath,* verse 13, is to be understood this fasting day, *on the tenth day of the seventh month,* and not the seventh day of the week, as will appear to him that will take the pains to compare that chapter with those places in Leviticus just now cited. But as there were many occasional fasts which private men kept as they had need, and as there was no month in the year (if we may believe the Hebrew calendar) wherein they did not observe some stated fasts in remembrance of some sad things that had befallen that nation in former times, and as the second and fifth days of every week were fasting days for religious persons, (which the Pharisee boasts that he observed, Luke xviii. 12,) so in conformity to this usual practice, their rulers did appoint four fasts to be solemnly observed every year, which are all mentioned together, Zach. viii. 19, and were in remembrance (as both ancient and modern, Christian and Jewish interpreters conjecture) of so many several remarkables in their ruin. The *fast of the fourth month* was in memory of the first breach made in the wall of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, of which we read Jer. lii. 6, &c. The *fast*

[1] Acts xxvii. 9.

[m] Lib. de Sept. et Festis. [tom. ii. p. 296.]

of the fifth in memory of the burning of the temple, which in that month happened[n], as the burning of the second temple by Titus did also. That *of the seventh* was in memory of the slaughter of Gedaliah by Ismael, of which we read Jer. xli. And that *of the tenth* was either in memory of the beginning of the siege, which proved to be so fatal to them, which fell out to be in that month[o], or else because in that month Ezekiel and they of the first captivity had the news brought to them that Jerusalem was taken[p]. For I take it to be very frivolous which some of the Jews say, that the fast of the fourth month was kept, because in it Moses broke the tables of stone; and the fast of the fifth, because in it they were prohibited to go from Kadesh-Barnea, which was the shortest way to the land of Canaan, &c. There being no reason then for to be given why they should not have been still observed after they came out of captivity; whereas the people were in doubt (as we shall see presently) whether they should keep these fasts any longer. But before I pass any further, it will not be amiss to take notice on what places in the law they built this practice. And you read in Numbers x. 9, that if they were going to war with an enemy that oppressed them, they are bid *to blow an alarm with trumpets,* and God would remember to save them. This they understand to be a command for *proclaiming a fast,* and *calling assemblies*[q], that they might humble themselves when they were in distress, and turn God's wrath away from them. And then because it is said, that in the land of their captivity they should *confess their sins, and the sins of their forefathers*[r], they concluded (as Ainsworth[s] there observes out of Maimony[t]) they ought to humble themselves on certain days of the year for the sins and miseries of their forefathers as well as their own; and so they appointed these fasts which are here mentioned in Zachary for that purpose.

2. Now the people being returned out of that captivity after seventy years' humiliation, they sent their messengers to the priest, to inquire whether they should keep the fast of *the fifth*

[n] Jer. lii. 12.

[o] 2 Kings xxv. 1; Jer. lii. 3; Ezek. xxiv. 1, 2.

[p] Ezek. xxxiii. 21.

[q] See Joel ii. 15.

[r] Levit. xxvi. 40.

[s] [Annot. in loc. p. 173.]

[t] [Tom. i. in Taanioth. ch. v. §. 1.]

month any longer[u]. And they not being able, it seems, to resolve the question, came to this prophet, as you may gather from ver. 5, where he speaks not only to all the people, but the priests also, in answer to this inquiry. The reason why they make mention of that fast only among all the four, was this; because the building of the temple was now in hand, in memory of whose destruction this fast (as hath been said) was observed; and so they might well think that the cause of that mourning was ceased, and they had reason rather to rejoice. But before the prophet comes to determine the case, and to tell them that the days should still be observed, only with a change of them from fasts into feasts, (as it is, chap. viii. 19,) he gives them to understand what a true fast is, lest afterwards their days of mirth should be to no better purpose than their days of sorrow; and lest they should think that such humbling of themselves had purchased their deliverance. And he tells them plainly, that they were much mistaken, if they imagined that God had been served by them in the fifth or seventh month either any better than by their forefathers, whose fasting is in the forementioned place[v] undervalued and slighted, as unworthy of his least regard. And this he doth in the fifth verse and those that follow, wherein he grants that they had indeed observed many days of humiliation, but yet absolutely denies that they had in the least done him any pleasure, or satisfied any of his desires. *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me?* or as it is in the Hebrew, הֲצוֹם צַמְתֶּנִי אָנִי, *did you fast your fast to me, I say to me?* which is a phrase like that in Haggai i. 4, הַעֵת לָכֶם אַתֶּם, *is it a time for you, I say for you* (who are newly delivered by me), *to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?* so here, *Did you fast to me, I say to me,* who have often declared to you, that I care not for these outward performances, unless they be accompanied with the hearty forsaking of sin? sure you cannot think it was בעבורי or לכבורי (as Aben-Ezra interprets it) 'because of me,' for my sake, for my glory, or to do any thing really pleasing unto me. *Did I command any such fast*

[u] Zech. vii. 2, 3, [v] Isaiah lviii.

as this unto you? (for so it may be rendered, by putting צויתי before אני.) Who bid you fast on this fashion? When you did eat and drink (as it is, verse 6,) did you any thing else but satisfy yourselves therein? The same kind of action is your fasting, and I am no more pleased with it than with your eating and drinking. If you had bestowed your time the quite contrary way, it had been as grateful to me as all your fasting days. This is the sense of the prophet's sharp answer, which being proposed by way of question, is a most peremptory and undeniable assertion, that they had not pleased him, but themselves, with all their labour; for he appeals to their own consciences, and makes them judges in the case. Do you yourselves now tell me, (saith God,) in your own sober thoughts, whether you can believe that not eating, weeping, howling, and such like things, are fasting unto me? No, you have been told often enough of this, and it is not the first time that you have been informed of your duty in this particular. *Nunquid non sunt verba quæ locutus est Dominus, &c.* (as the Vulgar renders those words, ver. 7, out of the Hebrew) 'Are not these the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited, and in her prosperity?' Have not I told your fathers by all my servants, while you were in this land, before your captivity, that such kind of service is not acceptable to me? And yet you their children are in the same mistake, and come confidently to me, telling me of your performing that which I always upbraided them withal. Methinks your own hearts should reprove you, and spare me a labour of giving you any further answer.

3. By which you clearly see that this was one of the ineffectual courses that their sick nation took for their recovery, viz. outward fasting and abstinence from food, whereby they much afflicted themselves. Very severe and rigorous they were in this thing, so that they refrained not only from the delicacies, but all the ordinary refreshments of nature. And so punctual and nice they were in these austerities, that they tell us, to the *afflicting of the soul* (by which phrase the great fast is described, Lev. xvi. 29, 31.) there were four things required beside forbearing all their food, viz. abstaining from and laying aside their baths, their ointments, their wives, and their shoes; i. e. every thing which might be a pleasure and delight to their

bodies. And these may seem to be included in that phrase, Zach. vii. 3: *Shall I weep in the fifth month,* (הַנָּזֹר), *separating myself as I have done these many years?* So serious they were, and scrupulous in this matter, that they thought they could not in conscience leave off these exercises, till they knew God's mind about it. Would not we have taken them for very pious folks? Would they not have passed among us for persons of a very tender conscience? And yet the Lord tells them, that if they had taken their repast, followed their callings, anointed their heads, done as they used at other times, they had equally given him content, and found as much acceptance with him, who looked for other kind of fasting, as the prophet tells us in vers. 9, 10, 11. of the same chapter. As a physician keeps his patient to a thin diet, and takes his ordinary food from his table, that he may starve the ill humours; so did they think to work a cure upon their souls, and by mere fasting from corporal food to make them well: not considering that the fast of the soul consists in an abstinence from those things that are hurtful to it, as the fast of the body is the forbearance of such meats as feed its diseases. "When their enemies were upon them (saith Procopius) they thought by bodily fasting to pacify God, and make him favourable to them; abstaining from meat, but not from spiritual wickedness[w]." And so all their severities amounted to a labour about nothing, because, whilst they would not for a world touch a bit of bread, they swallowed any unlawful gains, they tore the flesh, and gnawed the very bones of the poor, as shall be manifested before I leave their story. While they would not moisten their mouths with a sip of drink, they drunk in iniquity like water, and were filled with it to a strange excess, and it broke out like a sore disease. While they pined their bodies, they suffered their lusts, the body of sin, to be fat and well-liking. While they took down their flesh, and made their faces look thin, that which the Scripture calls *flesh* was lusty and strong, pampered and high fed. Their pride was not starved, their big and ambitious thoughts were not taken down; their inordinate, covetous desires were not impaired; their luxurious appetites were

[w] Τῶν πολεμίων ἐπικειμένων, διὰ σωματικῆς ὤοντο νηστείας ἐξευμενίζεσθαι τὸν θεὸν, βρωμάτων οὐ κακίας ψυχικῆς ἀπεχόμενοι. In Isa. lviii. [p. 656.]

not retrenched; nothing that was unreasonable in them was pared off, moderated, or abated: no, all sorts of sins were never more nourished and made more hungry and ravenous, than when fasting and its concomitants could engross the name and reputation of religion to themselves. And so their fasts were to no more purpose (not being thus designed) than if they had been feeding their *corps* with a plenty of more than ordinary cheer.

4. I need not tell you that the world hath ever since made use of the same remedy as a cure for all their surfeits of sin and wickedness. As the master many times sins, and his man suffers for it; so do men use their bodies, beating them with fasting and hunger, as if they were in the fault, and not their souls. This present generation hath been so laborious and zealous in their public and private, their weekly and monthly humiliations, that few ages can parallel them either in sins or such kind of sorrows. We have blown the trumpet so loudly, and proclaimed fasts so frequently, that we have made the world ring of them, and Heaven (I fear) deaf with them. Seeing we intended no more by them than what the Jews performed, they have proved but like the vulgar medicines which people take from their neighbours in bodily diseases, that leave them as sick as they were before, if not in a far worse condition. Men sin still at such an height, and grow so confident in it, that any judicious person may discern they are grown more sick by their remedies, and like to die by their religion. They could not be more licentious and intemperate in their desires than they are, if they had done all this penance on purpose to purchase a license to live as they list. And having their hearts so leavened with Jewish superstition, they had as good have gone and made a feast, invited their neighbours, and passed that time away merrily which they spent only upon a sad ceremony. For if we consider the mere simple act either of the one or the other of these things, they have no goodness in them: but, as they are designed by us to certain purposes which are good, so they become acts of religion.

5. And then fasting from food is good and profitable when it works upon our souls, as physic doth upon our bodies, purging out the foul humours, making us clean, and rendering us fit for action and employment. And first, in respect of the time

past, it is to be used as an act of sorrow and grief for our ingratitude; and our emptiness should make us feel that all our mercies come from God's fulness. It should testify our anger and displeasure against ourselves, and be an act of revenge upon ourselves for the abuse of those good things which God hath given us leave to feed on to our refreshment, but which we have fatted ourselves withal to an excessive fulness and wantonness. We should make it an expression of our repentance, and disclaiming of our former courses; an acknowledgment that we deserve not a mouthful of meat, but rather to have our daily bread taken from our tables, and not so much as the scraps and fragments of that plenteous provision left behind which God blesses our tables withal. And when it looks back with such an austere countenance upon our inordinate enjoyments; when it confesses our unworthiness, chides our unthankfulness, afflicts and chastises us for our former follies; then there is some good in it, and this sour sauce may make us hereafter relish all divine blessings better. But this is not all the good it must do us, for if we return again to our former course, it is but a mock repentance, and a gluttonous abstinence. For it is nothing but fulness that makes some men fast, and their fasting doth but prepare them for the greater fulness.

6. And therefore, secondly, in regard of the time to come, it is to be an act of mortification, designed to the starving and pining of our lusts; to the cutting off their provision, and withdrawing of their nourishment; to the learning of sobriety and temperate living; to the practising of self-denial in our appetites, and crossing our own desires; and, in short, to the bringing the body into subjection by taking away its provender, if it be an unruly beast that will not be governed. And so it is not a business of a day, or whose efficacy reaches but till night, but it hath a design upon the whole life, wherein we are to abstain as carefully from all excess in pleasures, yea, from all sin, as we do on that day from all our food. To this, that of the father's doth most truly accord, who calls fasting *θανάτου σύμβολον*, 'a symbol of death,' it being that which tends to the destruction of the body, and the taking away of its life. It should not only signify that we are dying to all earthly things, but it ought to be an instrument of death, to

take away the life of our lusts. And when it is so used, as not to be a whetstone to sharpen our stomachs against the next meal, but to be a knife to cut and slash off all the immoderation of our appetites, to wound and kill all our sins, it is a thing very acceptable to God, and hugely serviceable to our souls. But let us here note two things: first, that it is to be used not only to the mortifying of some, but of all our lusts and carnal affections. If we would fast holily and purely, we must *ἀποφοιτῆσαι τῶν ἰδίων θελημάτων*, as Cyril of Alexandria speaks[x], 'relinquish and depart from our own wills,' to choose that which is pleasing to God, and to yield a neck most gentle, tractable, and easily reined by his commands. We must withdraw the food of our appetites after vainglory and the praise of men, as well as after pleasures and fleshly entertainments. The swollen desires of honours and great heaps of worldly wealth must be diminished, no less than the intemperate cravings of the stomach and the lower belly. We must make it an instrument to dull and blunt the edge of all our inordinate longings, and to fix such deadening considerations in us as may take us quite off from pleasing ourselves. So Clemens Alex. observes, that a Christian knows very well the secret meaning and enigmatical sense of fasting upon the fourth and sixth days of the week, viz. Wednesday and Friday, which are called after the names of Mercury and Venus (the heathen governors of merchants and lovers.) *Αὐτίκα νηστεύει κατὰ τὸν βίον φιλαργυρίας τὲ ὁμοῦ καὶ φιληδονίας*[y], 'he thereupon learns to fast through his whole life from covetousness and voluptuousness.' The choice of those days was to give him this secret document and remembrance, that he should pine and waste away his greedy desires of riches and pleasures, from whence spring all manner of evils. And indeed it is one excellent end of a fast, if we intend thereby to enable ourselves to exercise charity to the poor, and to give in alms to them what we deny to ourselves. It is a sad thing if the Divine nature cannot teach us Christians so much tenderness as good nature taught some heathens. The people of Rhegium[z], when their neighbours of Tarentum were besieged by the Romans, fasted every tenth day, and sent those victuals to them which they should have

[x] In Isa. lviii. 3. [tom. ii. p. 814 D.]
[y] L. vii. Strom. [cap. 12. p. 877.] [z] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. v. c. 20.

eaten themselves; in memory of which a feast called Νηστεία, or, the Fast, was ever after celebrated by them when their town was relieved[a]. A rare example of kindness, scarce now to be matched, which made me think good here to insert it. But beside, a Christian (as Clemens also observes) fasts not only according to the law, ἀπὸ τῶν πράξεων τῶν φαύλων[b], 'from all evil actions;' but, according to the perfection of the gospel, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐννοιῶν τῶν πονηρῶν, 'from all wicked thoughts and imaginations.' These days give him notice what he is to do every day of his life; and the gospel fast is so strict, that it will not let an evil thought or affection have its daily food, though they never grow so strong as to beget any evil actions: but it subtracts their nourishment, and intends their mortification, and puts the soul upon cutting off all those luxuriances and excrescences, of which a sprouting fancy is apt to be guilty, which nobody observes. In short, it is as St. Basil hath defined it, "an alienation and estrangement of the soul from all evil[c]." But then, secondly, you must further note, that the use of it is to learn our appetites to feed upon spiritual things, upon God and all his holy truths. When the soul is at liberty from its attendance upon the necessities of the body, it should stir up its own hunger, and satisfy itself with its own proper nutriment. When it is not the palate's taster, it should labour so to taste and relish the sweetness of its own food, that ever after it may have a longing for it, and observe set times for its own repast. And so the body's fast should be the soul's festival, wherein it not only relieves and refreshes itself for that present, but affects its palate also with such a delicious savour of God's holy commands, that they seem *sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb*, and make the soul *break for the longing that it hath unto those judgments at all times.*

7. Thirdly, in respect of the time present, fasting is an help to self-examination, prayer, and holy meditation, and so it is to be used. It frees the mind from clouds and obscure vapours; it sets it at liberty from bodily mixtures and interposals, that it may altogether attend upon its own business and concernments. Κενοῖ τῆς ὑλῆς τὴν ψυχὴν ἡ νηστεία, καὶ καθαρὸν καὶ κου-

[a] [Compare the treatise of Repentance, part 2. chap. 12. vol. iv. p. 591.]

[b] Ubi supra.]

[c] Ἀληθὴς νηστεία ἡ τῶν κακῶν ἀλλοτρίωσις. — Orat. 2. de Jejun. [tom. ii. p. 14 A.]

φὴν σὺν τῷ σώματι παρίστησι τοῖς θείοις λόγοις, saith the forementioned Clemens[c]: 'fasting voids and discharges the soul of that matter which clogs its spirits, and renders it pure and clear, light and cheerful together with the body in heavenly employments.' We cannot at the same time eat, and drink, and taste pleasant things, καὶ πρὸς τοῖς ἀΰλοις εἶναι, 'and be conversant with things separate from all matter,' and that are within the knowledge of the mind only, as a philosopher could determine[d]. And therefore it may be to very good purpose to abstain from our daily food, that thereby our souls being lightened and exonerated of that dull, heavy matter which oppresses them, they may more freely and clearly mind their own most proper objects, which are perfectly spiritual. When there is this universal intendment in our fasting, it becomes of excellent use and singular advantage to us, and it may deserve all those great names which Ephraim Syrus bestows upon it[e], "The chariot to heaven, the raiser of prophets, the teacher of laws and wisdom, the custody of the soul, the secure companion of the body," with many more too long to be recited. But when we understand no more by it than the Pharisees did, who fasted indeed twice every week, but were still full of covetousness, rapine, and excess, we shall be so far from being able by it ἀπολογῆσαι τῷ Θεῷ, (as Basil[f] speaks,) 'to make our excuse to God,' that we shall the more accuse ourselves, and become very loathsome things to him, with all this kind of religion. For this is not the fast which God hath chosen, to pinch and use our bodies unkindly for a day.

8. And yet, alas! who is there that makes his fasting serve for any other matters but the ends of his reputation, or silence of conscience? I may take up the complaint of St. Basil[g] in one of his sermons. "Thou eatest no flesh, but thou devourest thy brother; thou abstainest from wine, but thou art full of violence and wrong. *Woe to them that are drunk, but not with wine*[h]. Anger is a drunkenness of the soul, and makes it beside itself: and so is sorrow, which drowns and drinks up

[c] In Eclog. [cap. 14. p. 992.]
[d] Porphyr. l. 1. Περὶ Ἀποχ. [§ 41. p. 34.]
[e] [De Jejun. p. 17. ed. Lat. per G. Voss. fol. Col. Agr. 1616.]
[f] [Orat. i. de Jejun. tom. ii. p. 3 B.]
[g] Orat. i. de Jejun. [tom. ii. p. 9 B.]
[h] [Is. li. 21.]

the understanding: and so is fear, which quite takes away the spirits: and so is every other passion, which is ἐκστατικὸν διανοίας, and puts the soul out of its truly natural temper." . . . . "Fast, therefore, from all these; for if thou still retainest thy sins, thou dost but pour thy tears into a tub with holes, (as Ephraim Syrus speaks in this case,) and losest all thy labour as well as thy reward."

CHAP. III.

1. *Mourning and sad lamentations were another art of moving God to pity them.* 2. *But very unsuccessful also, though it was practised among them with a great deal of ceremony.* 3. *The true nature of godly sorrow briefly opened in many particulars heaped together.* 4. *The small hopes that we can build upon such a waterish foundation as our tears, which are shown to be things ofttimes of little worth.*

1. And this will lead me to another thing, which was usually a companion of their fasting, and a means whereby they hoped to insinuate themselves into God's favour. *Weeping* I mean, *wailing and making lamentation for their sins;* which they were wont to do with no small sadness, and with many doleful complaints, as the word סָפוֹד in Zach. vii. 5. gives us to understand. It is said of Mordecai, that he *cried with a loud and bitter cry*[i]. Their *planctus*, or 'mourning,' used to be with howling, beating of their heads, or knocking of their breasts, and sometimes tearing of their hair, with such-like expressions of inward grief, whereby they thought to move God, as they are apt to do men, to compassion and pity toward them. For they ask the question, הַאֶבְכֶּה, *Shall I weep in the fifth month*[k]*?* &c.; intimating that they took it to be pleasing to him, and therefore they durst not leave it off, unless they understood he would be pleased with the ceasing of it.

2. Now God returns an answer to them, ver. 5, which grants more than they spoke of, and saith, *When you fasted and*

[i] Esth. iv. 1. [k] Zach. vii. 3.

mourned, i. e. wept with wailing and lamentation, *&c. you did it not to me.* For that word אֶבְכֶּה in the 3rd verse is altered here into סָפוֹד, *weeping* is changed into *mourning;* and it is as if he had said, "To what purpose is your weeping? yea, where you make a pitiful moan, a lamentable deal of do, most bitter complaints, and pour out your tears with loud cries, it is nothing at all to me." God could by no means be brought to a good liking of their sins, though they were content to be at this trouble for them, and wash them out of his memory with their tears. He could not be moved to mercy with blubbered eyes, and sad looks, and fearful screeches, and owl-like howlings in the night of their affliction. And there was as little in all the appendices of this weeping, which here we may reasonably conceive not to have been excluded: such as rending of the garments, putting on of sackcloth next their loins, wearing of dirty apparel, strewing ashes on their heads, lying on the ground, (a thing in fashion among heathens themselves, as Plutarch[1] tells us of the Athenian women,) hanging down their heads, and sitting in silence. Which last was an expression of sadness as well as their bitter cries, excess on either side being an indication of great grief. All this, I say, signified nothing to God, but that they were miserable: for, alas! the deep and hearty sorrow for sin; the mourning of their souls after God; the rending and tearing of their hearts; the doffing off all the fine gay clothing, wherein their hearts secretly prided themselves; the uncasing and stripping of their souls of all their coverings, wherein they hid and kept warm many beloved sins; the laying some grating considerations as close to their hearts as sackcloth was to their flesh; the pouring shame and reproach upon themselves; the blushing to look up unto the face of God with any confidence, till they were peremptorily resolved (against all impediments) to be better; the trembling prostrations at his feet; the fulness of grief that makes the heart unable to speak a word for itself: these things they were strangers unto. And therefore the prophet Isaiah[m] cries out, *Is this the fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush,*

[1] Νηστεύουσιν ἐν θεσμοφορίοις χαμαὶ καθήμεναι.—L. de Isid. et Osir. [p. 378.]

[m] Isa. lviii. 4, 5.

and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? No, *rend your hearts, and not your garments,* (saith the prophet Joel,) *and turn to the Lord with fasting, weeping, and mourning* [m].

3. Then tears are good, when they are the companions of a relenting and returning heart; when they run out of a soul that is running towards God. *All the house of Israel lamented after the Lord, and Samuel spake unto them, saying, If you return unto the Lord with all your heart, then put away the strange gods, and prepare your heart to the Lord, and serve him only, and he will deliver you* [n]. That is, if you be in good earnest, let us see something else beside your weeping and lamentation; and if these be the outward expressions of the inward relenting of your hearts, then put away all those displeasing things that have created you so much mischief, and cost you now so many tears. Away with all these sins that are such offences to yourselves as well as unto God. Thrust not these needles any more into your heart, these thorns into your eyes; carry them all away in this flood of tears. Tears are no further liked of God, than as they are expressions of a serious inward grief and sorrow, which is fed and nourished even by our reasons, and have their spring in the deepest considerations. And then only are they expected from us, when we use to weep in other cases of sadness, and upon doleful accidents. If that be our temper, to weep bitterly when some mournful object presents itself to us, wherein we are concerned; it is a sad sign to see our eyes dry, when the deplorable condition of our souls doth lie before us. But if our sorrow useth to express itself some other way in such cases, then that is all the outward token that God requires in this. Yet let it be what it will, God will not accept of it unless it amount to a great displeasure against ourselves; base thoughts of ourselves, that have committed such acts; a huge trouble in our mind for what is past; hearty wishes that all were undone; sense of our obnoxiousness to God's displeasure; humble and earnest requests to be received into his favour. Which last thing, if it be true, is inconsistent with our remaining in a state of sin, and therefore this sorrow goes a great deal further, and includes in it an hatred of sin; a resolution never more to have to do with it;

[m] [Joel ii. 13.] [n] 1 Sam. vii. 2, 3.

a choosing rather to die than willingly attempt such another act; an actual declining of it; a setting of ourselves to resist the next temptation; a placing of a watch over ourselves; and in every thing, such a temper as cannot be quiet in the condition it is, but which must be better. If we find not ourselves in this posture, all our tears are no better than puddle water, our sighs but the reek of a dunghill, our tearing of our hair but a fit of madness, our mourning but the noise of wolves; and there is not so much as the beginning of that work in us which God looks for, when we fast, and weep, and call after him.

4. And it will not be amiss to observe what cheap and easy things tears are, before we pass any further. First, there are some weeping tempers and dispositions; hearts so soft and tender, so full of moisture, that they have a flood of tears for any occasion. The breaking of a glass, the loss of the least thing that they love, an unkind word, the crossing of their wills in the smallest trifle, will make some hearts burst forth into them. And therefore easy and soft natures have little reason to lay any weight upon them. And, secondly, you know that stones will be moist, and weep in foul weather. In a great danger, or when some sad judgment is upon them, the hardest and most marble hearts may begin to relent and bedew themselves with tears. When men have dismal and black apprehensions of a tempest that rattles in their ears; when they have a sound of God's wrath that comes and amazes them with its fearful noise; it may make them shriek and cry out, and it may squeeze some sad groans from them, which may end in tears. Nay, thirdly, tears being bodily things, they are many times sooner caused by bodily calamities than by a sense of spiritual concernments. We may weep for the harm that sin hath done us, when we think it is for the wrong that we have done to God. The loss of our health or goods may most trouble us, and not the loss of God and our souls. The discredit sin hath brought upon our name may more affect us than the dishonour that thereby we have cast upon our Maker. And so, while men think that they weep for sin, and that God's name suffers, they do but pour out their own private grief, and lament their own sufferings: as the people of Israel (whom Zacharias speaks of, and whose case we are stating) might easily mourn

and weep all the seventy years, if it had been but to think of the great calamities that had befallen them. The ruin of their city, the burning of their temple, the captivity of their nation, the pouring out their blood like water, and sundry doleful circumstances in all these, might well make them wish, with Jeremiah, ix. 1, *that their head was waters, and their eyes a fountain of tears, that they might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of their people.* But what is all this to a sense of sin, and a groaning under the intolerable burden of their iniquity? To what purpose are all these tears, if inward grief and anguish for sin do not give them all their acrimony and smartness? if they wash and scour not the soul from all its filth and nastiness? Or, fourthly, tears may be but some heat-drops, when men have a great sense of some mercy, and the sun shines very comfortably upon them: which though they are very great, and bigger than fall in more constant showers, yet they are soon over, and all is fair again. Or, fifthly, they may be like the morning dews; some good moods when they are cool and sober, a good fit as soon as they are up in a morning, and before they go into any company or employment. But in the heat of the day, and when a temptation comes, they are all licked up, and no footstep of them remains. And it is well if they become not more scorched and dry by such little moistures. Or, sixthly, suppose that there be some present heavy sense of sin that makes them big with a cloud, and express these briny tears; yet, alas! they are but like a sudden dash of rain, which is soon passed over, and then all is clear again until the next affectionate shower. At the next meeting they entertain their sins with as great a friendship and familiarity as if there had never been any falling out, nor any unkindnesses passed between them. And if, after some embraces and new endearments, there happen again a new distaste also; yet the reconcilement is easy, and a small importunity will make them forget all the injuries their sins have done them, and all the ill language that they have given their sins. Such are the tears of many a man who cozens himself into a conceit that he is a penitent; they are but the issue of a natural tenderness, or the product of some sharp affliction, or the overflow of some sudden passion, whose surges may swell by some outward as well as inward causes. As a child, while he is under the lashes of the rod, makes a sad face,

and waters his cheeks, and promiseth loudly, but as soon as the boys come, goes to his play as merrily as ever again; so is it with many sinners, who are good no longer than they feel the smart; but smile upon their ancient pleasures, and wash their faces in sweet waters, which you would have thought should never have been washed with any thing but salt tears. Or as you see a young man, who, being in love with one much below him, and therefore chidden by his father, weeps like a little babe, and seems as if he would drown himself in the flood of his tears; but upon the very next sight is as hot in his love, and as eager in his pursuit, as though there had been no such cooler: so it is with many fond men, who in the absence of those creatures that they doat upon, and when they are under sound reproofs from God for their follies, they weep as if they meant to leave themselves no eyes to look upon them any more. But yet when those objects shall happen to give them a kind greeting, they cannot forbear to answer the salutation with their usual civility. And yet how much men please themselves in this tenderness of heart, is more apparent than that I need speak of it. They take this easiness to be sorrowful to be a sign of grace, and that their hearts are not hardened; whenas they have the same easiness to sin, and are no harder to be wrought upon to consent unto it. They will take this to be *godly sorrow*, though it *work no repentance and amendment*, in spite of what the Scripture saith[o], and the clearest reason that can be afforded. But I will spend no more time about those who cozen themselves with such little things; for all that I can say will not convince them, unless they will consider; and if they will, then half of what hath been said will be sufficient to convince them. And besides, I would not either make this book swell to a great bulk, (which I do not affect,) or pass over too lightly what I chiefly intend.

[o] [2 Cor. vii. 10.]

CHAP. IV.

1. *Confession of sin was another usual attendant upon a fast.*
2. *But no more prevailing than the rest as they used it.*
3. *True confession, the nature and workings of it described, not only in the mouth, but in heart and life.*
4. *More valuable with God than sacrifices.*

1. THE tongue is a member that hangs so loose, and is of such ready motion, that when the heart is full of sighs, and the eyes of tears, it is no difficult matter to draw this neighbour into their assistance, to tell a sad story, and to beg for some relief. And therefore in those times of solemn fasting and mourning, they used to make large confessions of their sins, and pray to God for the pardon of them, and turning away of his wrath. Concerning confessions, you may read the ninth chapter of each of these three books, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, where they spread before God the transgressions of the nation, and acknowledge their great demerits. And you may well think the people were not negligent in this piece of importunity, the mouth using to speak, when the soul is full of desire to be eased of the burden that lies upon us. They brought (it is most likely) before God long catalogues of their own sins, and of the provocations of their forefathers: they accused their kings, princes, prophets, priests, and all the people of the land, of many rebellions and treasons against him. They charged themselves liberally with all manner of crimes against God and each other, and they subscribed to all the indictments which the prophets of the Lord used to lay against them. They condemned and sentenced themselves before him, and acknowledged that all his judgments were righteous, and that they deserved to suffer far worse punishments, if he should deal severely with them. And yet this was nothing but an hypocritical talk to God, while they were in love with those sins that they did so solemnly confess; and remained in a state of reconciliation to those iniquities, of which they stood there by their own consciences arraigned.

2. But though this kind of devotion might give themselves good content, yet it gave God none at all. It is an easy matter for a man to rail at himself, while he thinks the better of

himself for it. It puts a man to no great cost or trouble to reckon up all his debts, if thereby he hope to get them all discharged. But God is not of our mind, and doth not like a man the better because he tells him he is a grievous sinner, but far the worse, because against his conscience he continues still a sinner. He is so far from finding a kind entertainment with God by these pretended submissions, that he will rather meet with a frown, and this angry sentence, "Out of your own mouths, O ye hypocritical traitors, shall you be condemned; and you shall perish, you yourselves being judges." For this is a most ridiculous piece of pageantry, and as if we should say to him, Lord, we are most miserable sinners, most notorious offenders, and so we intend with thy good leave still to continue. We have broken all thine holy laws, and may we but do so still, we will never disown the act, but always sadly acknowledge it. This confession signifies nothing else, but that men desire they may do still as they were wont to do, at no greater charge than again to confess it. They beg that the acknowledgments of their faults may procure leave to practise the same again with no greater trouble, but only to make a new acknowledgment. It speaks only that they are sinners, and that they desire the favour to be so still, and they will not stick continually to make confession of it. Confession is the condition of sinning more freely in their divinity: they disburden their consciences by it, that they may lay on more load. As the mariners unlade the ship to take in new stowage, and as the drunkard vomits up his former draughts to continue the merry meeting; so do men that are weary with sinning bring up all before God that troubles their stomach, that so under the security (as they imagine) of his pardon, they may fill themselves again when they have a mind unto it. They think it not good manners to come to God's table smelling rankly of a debauch, and so against some such high time they may confess their sins, as a means to cleanse and purge their souls: or their consciences are griped, and their sins make them sick and ill at ease, and so they go to disgorge themselves, (for by no better name can I call it,) and make a relation of their case to the great Physician. But then, as many patients, if they hear but a word drop from the physician's mouth that their disease is not dangerous, but they

may easily recover, will take no physic at all, but throw away their bills of advice; so, if these sinners can but hear one good promise, any merciful saying that gives men encouragement to hope, away they go with it in their mouths, and with no amendment in their lives: and yet many times these confessions come not from so high a cause, but owe their birth to mere custom and imitation, being as common as to say, Lord have mercy upon us, we are all sinners; and, God help us.

3. But whatsoever men may mean by them, such confessions as these signify nothing at all unto God. For the sins that men rehearse unto him are all known by him before, and lie continually in his eyes. If this be all they have to say, that they are sinners, and have committed such and such acts against him, they may as well let their tongues rest in quiet; there is nothing new in all this. Then confession is significant, when it is an act of shame and reproach to ourselves, an act of grief and hatred, a disavowing and disclaiming for ever such practices. Now we say something unto God, this is a new business, the case is quite altered, and there is forgiveness with him for such persons. So the apostle tells us[o], *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Which is to the same sense with that of the Wise Man[p]: *He that confesseth his sins, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.* And what Solomon prays for in the behalf of such supplicants[q], God himself promises to them[r], as you may see if you will take the pains to read the places. True confession signifies that we are ashamed and blush to look up unto heaven; that we have nothing to say for ourselves, but much against them; that we cannot but cry out upon our own baseness and falseness unto God; that we had rather not be, than do one such vile act again; that we are grieved and pained at the very heart, and cannot but give vent to our souls in sighs and groans; that we cannot with patience think upon ourselves, nor hold from proclaiming our own guiltiness; that we remember nothing with so much sadness as that we have been offenders, and that we resolve by God's assistance and our utmost endeavours to grow

[o] 1 John i. 9. [p] Prov. xxviii. 13. [q] 1 Kings viii. 47, 48. [r] 2 Chron. vii. 14.

better, may we but be pardoned such offences. It is begotten by a deep sense of the nature of sin, and the high affront which it puts upon God. The soul is astounded with such thoughts, and struck with a strange palsy and a fearful trembling, that it should dare to adventure upon such a contempt. The multitude of these desperate acts makes it groan earnestly for a deliverance from them. Every groan, every word grates upon the heart, as a file doth upon iron, which at every rub fetches off some of the rust. And the further it proceeds in such confessions, the more is all affection to sin diminished and impaired.

4. Now God loves such a pungent sorrow as pricks to the very heart, and gives a deadly wound to all our sins. Such words are acceptable to him as strike like darts through the very life of our lusts, and nail them to the cross. He loves when we look upon him whom we have pierced, and mourn so bitterly that our hearts are shot through with an incurable wound to the flesh, and all the affections and desires thereof: and he loves such a confession as expresses this sorrow, this pain, and this torment of our hearts, which will be mixed with a vehement displeasure and hatred both against ourselves and our sins. This he loves more than all sacrifices, or such like gifts, whereby they thought many times to flatter him. And therefore the returning sinners promise, as God bids them, that they will *render the calves of their lips*[t]; i. e. as Kimchi interprets it, "humble and penitent confessions instead of sacrifices, for thou lovest (saith he) the words of repentance best." And therefore, he observes, that the scape-goat[u], on which the wickedness of the children of Israel was laid, that he might carry them away, was not offered upon the altar, but confession only was offered to God, which was far better. But then this confession of ours is to be (1) with a promise never to do so any more; and (2) it is to be made good by actual forsaking of sin; and (3) it is to be done presently in such instances as we have been most guilty in. So we read in Numb. v. 7, and the Hebrew doctors' comments upon it. The text saith, that in case of a trespass, a man was to confess his sin that he had done, and to make a recompense for any wrong by a full

[t] Hos. xiv. 2. [u] Lev. xvi. 21.

restitution, with some addition to it. And Maimon saith[x] the form of confession was this: "O God, I have sinned, I have done perversely, I have trespassed before thee, and have done thus and thus; but lo, I repent, and am ashamed of my doings, and I will never do this thing again." And he saith, no atonement could be made for a man, no, not when he had made satisfaction for the damage he had done his neighbour, "till he had confessed, and did promise to turn away from doing so again for ever." And therefore when Ezra exhorts the people to make confession unto the Lord God of their fathers, he adds, *and do his pleasure, and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives*[y]. And it may be added, that it is part of God's will and pleasure that we should *confess our faults one to another*, as well as unto him[z]: when the heart is truly humbled, it will be glad of any ways to shame itself, or to make satisfaction to others that are offended, or to convince sinners, that they may cease to offend. But whatsoever volumes we bring against ourselves, either before God or others, without such a sense of sin as I have described, it is but lying unto the Lord, and telling him hypocritical stories, which will remain as matter of new accusation upon our account. We shall but more provoke and incense his anger against us when we think for to avert it, and by our own breath kindle a flame that will devour us.

CHAP. V.

1. *Prayer is another refuge they betook themselves unto in their misery.* 2. *And so now men expect great things from it.* 3. *But self-love indites them.* 4. *And men's love to their sins makes nonsense of them.* 5. *For when they pray against sin, they labour to uphold it.* 6. *And so neither their own prayers nor the prayers of good men will prevail for them.* 7. *What prayers are acceptable to God.* 8. *And for what.*

1. It is a saying ascribed unto an angel in the book of

[x] V. Ainsw. in loc. [p. 28, from the Canones de Pœnitentia of Maimonides, cap. i. p. 1.] [y] Ezra x. 11. [z] James v. 16.

Tobit[a], that *prayer is good with fasting*. And of this the people of the Jews had such an opinion, that they never neglected it on those solemn days, but thought that it could fetch down any blessings from heaven upon them. God himself commands, when he calls for a fast, that they should cry unto him[b]. This they used to do (saith the book of Judith) *with great fervency, with earnestness, with all their power*[c]. And sometimes (as is there expressed[d]) they called on the God of Israel *all night* for help. Their hearts were even dissolved into petitions. They seemed to be so far from stoniness, that they were more yielding than flesh, and could melt into water. Their eyes could not flow with tears so plentifully as their hearts did with prayers. For so in the Chaldee those words are paraphrased, 1 Sam. vii. 6: *They drew water, and poured it out before the Lord;* i. e. they poured out their hearts in supplications unto him.

2. And so now at this day men are content to pump hard for as many buckets' full of prayers as will hold them pouring out from morning until night. Devouter persons the heavens never saw, if this be to be religious. How can God choose but pour down his blessings on such men, who are so free and openhearted to him, and could be content to do nothing else but present him with such services? Prayer passing under such a magnificent name as the "key of heaven's gate," and having those Scriptures applied to it which speak of *having power with God and prevailing*, men think that by it they can do great matters, and place no small confidence in its authority. So I call it, because they are ready to apply those words to its office, *Concerning the work of my hands command you me*[e]. Though good interpreters (which I think fit to admonish the reader of by the way) do read that verse with an interrogation to this sense: "Do you command me what I shall do, and ask me what I mean to deal so with my sons, the people of Israel, who, I say, shall go into captivity?" which agrees well with ver. 9, 10: *Wo be to him that strives with his Maker*, &c. *Wo be to him that saith to his father, What begettest thou?* &c. And as the words lie in our translation,

[a] Tob. xii. 8. [b] Joel i. 14. [c] Judith iv. 9, 12, 15. [d] vi. 21.
[e] Isa. xlv. 11.

their meaning is only this, that they should inquire of Isaiah and the rest of his prophets concerning the future state of their nation, and bid them tell them what he was about to do with them, from whom they should receive good satisfaction, both of his justice in their captivity, and his mercy in sending them deliverance by Cyrus, which in that chapter he is treating of. But so, I say, it is that men advance their prayers to such a prerogative, that they have engrossed the name of religion to themselves, and they have learnt to call praying "going to duty," as if this were all, or the chief of what we have to do. And so if in their confessions they should be dejected and cast down, yet their petitions are able to lift them up very high in hopes again. Especially since some have taken this new way of boldness to tell God in plain English, that "he must not, that he cannot deny them, and that they will have audience, and that without any delay also." Which are no devised expressions of mine, but those which some of name have uttered, and which their followers may be apt to imitate, as an high token of a zealous faith. If any be offended at this plainness, it is their own fault that occasion it, and they cannot be more offended than many good souls are at their saucy language.

3. But it is now as it was then in another regard also; the prayers of the Jews were commonly to no other purpose but "that God would pardon them, turn again to them, and save their nation from their enemies' hands; whilst they thought not of turning unto him, and putting all his enemies out of their souls." Nothing was sadder to them than to be in bondage and slavery, and therefore that made their hearts sigh more than their sins. Their prayers differed from the desires of good men, as the Mahometan's Lord's prayer from that of the Christian's. The last thing that we beg of God is, that no temptation may prevail over us to make us fall again into those sins for which we beseech forgiveness: but the Turks conclude that prayer (which they call the Prayer of Jesus the Son of Mary) in this fashion: "Let not such an one rule over me, which will have no mercy on me, for thy mercies' sake, O thou most merciful[g]." Self-love and sense of misery can indite good

[g] See M. Greg. Observ. p. 165. [Works, part i. p. 161. Gregory refers for his authority to Selden's notes on Eutychius.]

store of petitions, adorn them with eloquence, inspire them with fervency, and thrust them forward with a lusty degree of confidence. But as they say of some sort of precious stones, that though they are of sovereign virtue, yet they lose all their force, if they be put into a dead man's mouth; so it is with this Christian jewel, which doth wonders when it is itself, but languishes and dies when it is in the mouth of unreformed sinners. Such men's prayers are but a stinking breath, which is very offensive to the nostrils of God. They are so far from being a grateful voice unto him, that he turns away his ears from them, as we do from the braying of asses or the talk of fools. And therefore he tells the people of Israel[h], that he would not have them *fast as they did, to cause their voice to be heard on high*, not regarding either their mournful howlings or their clamorous petitions, whereby they thought to stir him up to help them. And by the prophet Jeremiah he tells them (xiv. 12) that *when they fast he will not hear their cry. For he that turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination*[i]. If men will not hear God, he will not hear them, yea, he cannot give ear unto them. For the things that they love and embrace are such necessary causes of the evils under which they groan, and so inconsistent with the mercies that they desire, that unless God alter the nature of things, or change the method of his proceedings in the government of the world, he cannot hearken to their petitions. Either he must change his mind, or they must change theirs, or their prayers be unanswered. And therefore, unless they heartily renounce their sins, and thoroughly discharge their iniquities, all their prayers for sending mercies and for removing miseries are a piece of mere nonsense, incoherent ignorant stuff, which will be returned with such shame upon them, as if he had thrown the dung of the sacrifices in the face of those that brought them.

4. When men bear a love to those sins, the evil consequents of which they desire may be prevented or remedied, that they may not ruin them; they are as ridiculous and unsuccessful, as if a man should beg health, while he continues in his riotous and intemperate course of living. It is as if we should desire

[h] Isa. lviii. 4. [i] Prov. xxviii. 9.

that the effect may cease, while the cause remains in act; that God would not be angry, though we continually provoke him, and that he would not hate us, though we do not love him. Let a man raise his confidence by what arts he pleaseth, and speak with a boldness in his prayers, as though he would command heaven, and have what he would of God; yet he cannot have a true faith that he shall be heard, unless he utterly abandon in heart and resolution whatsoever is incompatible, and cannot stand with the things that he desires. We may call our fasts by the name of *days of prayer*, (as we commonly do,) but though we should pray from morning until night, though the whole nation should cry to God that he would bow the heavens and come to save us, though it should be with a voice that would rend the clouds, and seem to make way for him to come down to our rescue; yet if we be in love with our sins, the causes of our trouble, we have put in such a strong *caveat*, such a bar to our suits and petitions in the court of heaven, that we can obtain no audience. And therefore some heathens were wiser than these *sottish children* of Israel, (as Jeremiah calls them, iv. 22;) for when Nineveh was afraid of God's judgments, they not only proclaimed a fast, and cried mightily to the Lord, but they *turned every one from their evil way, and the violence that was in their hands*[k]. It is a prudent saying of Cyril of Alexandria[l]; "Fasting is a choice thing, (χρῆμα ἐξαίρετον,) prayer is profitable, and of great benefit it is to humble our souls in God's eyes; but it is most absurd for those that come in this manner to obtain mercy, to provoke the divine Lawgiver in another way, by not loving to do his commands."

5. But so willing are men to deceive themselves, that though sometimes they go a little further, yet they suffer their prayers to fall short of heaven. When men have made their faces sour with fasting, they begin sometimes to look angrily upon their sins, and to take up some resolutions to be revenged on them. And therefore they beg the divine grace to destroy them, and beseech him to send his Spirit to purge their souls from them. But then, as if they had no mind to be heard, they resolve to be at no trouble nor pains themselves about this great business.

[k] Jonah iii. 5, 8.

[l] [In Es. lviii. 4, tom. ii. p. 814 B.]

They leave all to the care of God, whom they would have so far to concern himself in our affairs, as not to expect that we should be such creatures as he made us. They sit still and wait for an unheard of power from above, as if divine faith were a reliance on God to carry such by force to heaven, who have no list to walk in the way thither. Such prayers have a perfect likeness to the requests of the man in the fable to Hercules, when his cart stuck fast in the mire, who would neither prick forward his oxen, nor lay his own shoulders to the wheels, nor unload the waggon, but cast all upon the strength of his god, expecting that he should come and draw it out. And such an answer as was returned to that silly swain will very well befit such petitioners:

O bone, disce pigris non flecti numina votis,
Presentesque adhibe, quum facis ipse, Deos[m].

'Learn, good sir, that God is not moved by lazy desires, and sluggish wishes, but that thou shalt then find thy god present, when thou thyself art busy about thy work.' It is help that we beg, and that supposes we are active though infirm. Assistance we crave, and that implies our endeavours, though ineffectual unassisted. They are in all regards therefore idle prayers which careless sinners put up for divine aid and strength, seeing they cannot speak common sense, nor know the meaning of their own language. They ask succour against their enemies, but either they mean nothing, or else victory without fighting: and if that be it they mean, it is as if they asked nothing, because there is no such thing to be granted. O that all men would at last learn to labour for that after which they seem to long; and not make a perpetual trade of praying much, and doing little or nothing. Let us not merely run from one church to another, from private fasts to public, from common to extraordinary devotions; for this was the manner of the heathen people, who when they could not prevail by their daily sacrifices and prayers, betook themselves to more laborious, but unsuccessful devices. We read of Moab in Isa. xvi. 12, that *when he was weary in the high places, he came to his sanctuary to pray, but he could not prevail*, i. e. when they

[m] ['Disce tamen pigris,' &c.—Avian. fab. 32 fin.]

had tired themselves with petitions for deliverance, after the ordinary form that was used, they went to the most holy place in the land, where their great god Chemosh was worshipped, and there they doubted not but to speed. But as they prevailed not, because they did nothing at all but pray, no more shall we, (of whom they are a perfect picture,) while we have confidence in our repeated prayers, without a real reformation. This kind of faith which men cherish in themselves is the most horrid infidelity, greater than which the worshippers of Chemosh or Baal could not be guilty of. For they believe not him at all who hath said, *Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*[n]. And *whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in his sight*[o].

6. But I must add further, that the case may so be, that though there be some good men in a nation that do most seriously and heartily pray for it, yet they may not be able to help it, nor prevail for the averting of God's anger. For the attesting of which truth, I might call in the testimony of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xi., where, after God had said, ver. 11, that if the people did cry unto him, he would not hearken unto them, he adds, ver. 14, that he will not have the prophet pray for them, nor lift up a cry in their behalf, for it shall be in vain. The like to which you may read, Jer. xiv. 11. And therefore he saith in Lam. iii. 8, 44, that *when he did cry and shout, God shut out his prayers, and covered himself with a cloud, so that they could not pass through.* The like testimony Ezekiel would afford us, who tells us more than once, ch. xiv., that in some cases, three such prevalent persons as Noah, Job and Daniel, shall obtain no more than their own security. And I might have all their suffrages to this, that sometimes nothing less than an universal reformation (in the great officers, magistrates and governors especially) will procure God's favour. But it is time to draw towards a conclusion of this chapter; and in the following discourses this matter will be abundantly cleared.

7. Then our prayers are to good purpose for ourselves or the nation, when we or they come to God with an holy dispo-

[n] Luke xiii. 3. [o] 1 John iii. 22.

sition of heart to forsake our sins, which we pray may be forgiven; with a readiness of heart to make use of that divine grace which we beg at his hands, and with a resolution to do that ourselves which we desire he would do for us. When they are instruments to piety and godliness, and put our hearts into such an holy frame, that even by our actions we may pray and pull down the blessings of Heaven upon us, then they are indeed strong and prevailing petitions. For as Clemens Alex. speaks of a spiritual person, Εὐχὴ μὲν αὐτῷ ὁ βίος ἅπᾶς, καὶ ὁμιλία πρὸς Θεόν[p]· 'his whole life is a prayer to God, and a familiar converse with him.' He prays all day long in some sort, viz. as to the effect and issue of prayer. For the holiness of his life speaks most powerfully and effectually, if not more prevalently than any other thing in his behalf to God, being the use and the improvement of that grace which he hath received, and so directly entitling him to the blessings that are in that promise, *To him that hath shall be given.*

8. But yet we must take notice of this, that when we pray thus to the reforming and amending of our hearts and lives, the blessings that we are most confidently to expect are those of a spiritual and eternal nature; such as are forgiveness of sins, acceptance with God to life: and we cannot be certain sometimes that by all our reformation we shall avert temporal judgments upon our own persons or our nation. Perhaps the decree may be irrevocably gone forth, the ruin of a people or person may be absolutely determined, or at least some very sharp punishment, without any possibility of reversing the sentence, may be resolved upon; and though the sin may be forgiven to some (and those the chiefest) purposes, yet not to all. *Who can tell whether God will return and repent?* was all that could be said in the Ninevites' case. And in the case of Jerusalem, it was at last decreed, that their city and temple should be destroyed, without any hopes of prevention of such a calamity, though they had space given them to repent in, that their souls might find mercy. Though it be said of Josiah, that *he turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, so that there was none like him; yet notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his*

[p] [Strom. lib. vii. cap. 12. p. 875.]

great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah [q]. And afterward, when they were carried captive, the Lord decreed a seventy years' banishment; and though many, no question, were reformed, and they *poured out their prayer when God's chastening was upon them*, yet they could not get the time cut short, nor spy any hopes of deliverance, as you may see, *Like as a woman* (say they) *with child, that draweth nigh to the time of delivery, is in pain and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen* [r]. This therefore is our satisfaction, that when we fast and pray aright, we shall partake of the principal benefits that attend upon them, though not always of all the fruits and blessings which have thereby been procured.

CHAP. VI.

1. *Sacrifices another way of turning away the wrath of God.* 2. *But by their trusting in them, they brought his wrath upon them.* 3. *God did not value them when they neglected his greater commands.* 4. *Therefore we should not trust in outward worship. Many places of Scripture are in this chapter illustrated.*

1. Those prayers that we spoke of in the last chapter were thought by the Israelites to be most powerful which were offered up at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice, which were the hours of prayer. And therefore in these sacrifices they put a great deal of confidence, which they were not forgetful to offer unto God after as liberal a sort as he could wish. They hoped by these holy vapours, together with their own holy breath, to make Heaven of their mind, and stoop to their desires. And therefore, as on the day of the great fast there was the greatest sacrifice of expiation offered for the sins of the people; so we may presume that on other days of fasting they offered some extraordinary sacrifices.

[q] 2 Kings xxiii. 25, 26. [r] Isa. xxvi. 16, 17, 18.

And so much, methinks, may be collected out of the book of Judith, where we read[s], that on their fasting days the high priest and the rest of the sons of Aaron stood and ministered before the Lord with their loins girt with sackcloth, and offered the daily burnt-offerings with the vows and free gifts of the people. In Jer. xiv. 12. we read also of burnt offerings joined with fasting, and crying unto God. These sacred vapours, and the holy perfumes of incense, they thought would scatter all infections that might annoy the air. If they did but pay God his sheaf and his cake, at the appointed times of first-fruits, and furnish him a plentiful table every day, then they feared no famine to eat up their land. The beasts that were slain at their altar they thought would fright away all wild beasts from coming among them. While the heavenly fire burnt, they could not imagine that any other fires should consume them. They hoped that Ariel, (as the altar is called[t], i. e. *the strong one*, or the *lion of God*, would devour all their enemies, as it did the flesh that was laid upon it. God is said to *dwell between the shoulders of Benjamin*[u], because the altar and the house of God stood in the portion of that tribe; and therefore some of the Jews interpret that blessing which Jacob gave him to be meant of the morning and evening sacrifices, when it is said[v], *Benjamin shall raven as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.* As though the altar did but feed upon its own conquests, and feast itself with its own victories over their enemies. And indeed when God speaks concerning the destruction of the Assyrians who besieged Jerusalem, he describes himself in this manner; *The Lord whose fire is in Sion, and whose furnace is in Jerusalem*[x]. As if the angel should come with fire from the altar to burn up the army of Sennacherib, which was encamped about the city of God. And God dwelling thus among them in a familiar manner, made them much presume upon his favour towards them; hoping that he would maintain his own habitation, and not suffer himself to be ejected. They little thought that he would ever be a *consuming fire* to them, or burn up his own house; but they imagined his wrath would smoke only against the heathen, and this fire on the altar

[s] Judith iv. 14. [t] Ezek. xliii. 15. [u] Deut. xxxiii. 12.
[v] Gen. xlix. 27. [x] Isaiah xxxi. 9.

would only scorch their adversaries, if they did take care but to feed it with constant sacrifices.

2. But in this they were miserably mistaken, and it proved to be quite otherwise than they accounted. For if you read Isaiah xxix. 1, 2. you shall find that God pronounces a woe to *Ariel*, (i. e. to Jerusalem,) and saith, though they should observe all their yearly feasts, and kill a multitude of sacrifices, yet he will distress his own city, *and it shall be unto him as Ariel*, i. e. the people should be slaughtered just as the beasts were at the altar. It is like that they had given to Jerusalem this name of Ariel, because of the altar of God that was in it, wherein they trusted. They took this city to be as strong as a mighty lion, and that none should be able to prevail against the *mountain of God* (as the word *Harel* signifies, which is once used, Ezek. xliii. 15[y].) But the prophet tells them, that they should resemble Ariel in a quite contrary sense: that name they should call their city by, but much to their cost. For as the blood of the sacrifices was poured out, and their flesh torn in pieces by Ariel, or the altar; so he saith, should their blood be shed, and their enemies should rend them, as a lion doth his prey. And therefore he tells them by the prophet Jeremiah[z], that *when they fast, he will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offerings and oblations, he will not accept them, but consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.* And the prophet Hosea tells them, that *though they should go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord, they should not find him*[a]; though they should bring a drove of sacrifices to enforce their prayers, and ingratiate themselves with him, yet they should not gain his presence, but he would be withdrawn from them. And in the next chapter God tells them of a thing more delightful to him than any sacrifices, and that was to do good to the poor, and become like to God, whom they worshipped[b]. But of that they had very little; no more *goodness* than a *morning cloud*[c]. They had not much more than the reek that went up from their sacrifices in the morning, some little sprinklings and drops of good nature, but no hearty and divine love unto others. And therefore *I have hewn them* (saith he)

[y] [Margin.] [z] Jerem. xiv. 12. [a] Hos. v. 6.
[b] Hos. vi. 6. [c] Ver. 4.

by the prophets, I have slain them by the word of my mouth, and thy judgments are as a light that goeth forth. Which last phrase may be interpreted to this sense, that their punishments should be as manifest and visible to all as the flame that went from their sacrifices was unto them; for those were not the things that he so much desired, but, as it follows in the next verse, he *desired mercy, and not sacrifice,* &c.

3. And that you may see how much he undervalued these things, it is observable what is noted by Maimonides, that as there were no sacrifices admitted for the greatest sins, (as all considering men know,) so the smallest sacrifices were offered for greater sins, and greater sacrifices for the less. For idolatry and apostasy from the one God of Israel there was no offering prescribed, but the guilty person was to be stoned. But for idolatry ignorantly committed (concerning which crime they interpret that place, Lev. iv. 27.) the offering was a kid of the goats, and that a female. No creature that was offered was accounted more vile than a goat, and the female is of meaner condition than the male; and yet this was all that was to be offered (according to that understanding of those words) for so great a sin: whereas a leper, who suffered only a bodily defilement, was to offer two he-lambs, (which were more noble, both in kind and sex,) besides one ewe-lamb for his cleansing[d]. And so an offering for a trespass, which was a smaller fault, was to be a ram[e]; but in an offering for sin, which was a greater, a goat would serve the turn, (which was a lower creature,) and a female, which was of the lower sex[f]. By this might be signified, that as the sacrificer could not expiate for sin by their own worth and value, (for then the greatest must have been given for the greatest fault,) so the greater sins they committed against him, of the less acceptableness were all their sacrifices, and the more he did undervalue them. He could not be drawn to approve of their evil doings, by all the pompous entertainments they made for him at his table, which was the altar; no, when their iniquities increased, he did as good as say, Away with them; I care not for them; bring me not the flesh of rams, or of lambs; I had as lief eat of a she-goat, unless you will be better. Insomuch that if they grew

[d] Lev. xiv. 10. [e] vi. 6. [f] v. 6.

enormous and heinous in their crimes, God would have nothing to do with them, nor accept any of their gifts that they would bestow upon him, there being no sacrifice appointed for the breach of any moral precept. And therefore by the prophet Isaiah he sharply reproves their forwardness and diligence in these services, saying, *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices? I am full of burnt-offerings,* &c. (i. e. I even nauseate the plenty of these devotions.) *When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands?* &c. *The sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting; your new moons,* &c. *are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them,* &c. And he bids them, if they intend that he should speak kindly to them, and be friends with them, that they should *cease to do evil, learn to do well, and put away the evil of their doings from before his eyes*[g]. Strange indeed it was, and worse than all the rest, that they should see so much reason to do all those things, and yet see no reason to be good. But they were like to most men now, who will have God to be pleased with what pleases them, and gives no great distaste to their natures; but will part with nothing that they dearly love, though it be the greatest offence to him. Very desirous they were to give God content by sacrifices, and make him satisfaction, even for the most secret sins, if we may believe themselves. For the burnt-offerings, as some of them say, were to expiate for the thoughts of the heart, or (in their phrase) for that which goes up in the heart; but they forgot what Isaiah saith in another place, that unless the *unrighteous man forsake his thoughts,* and *return to the Lord,* he will not *have mercy on him*[h].

4. And the Christian world still depends on their prayers, which are their daily sacrifices; and on their alms, which are another offering unto God; and upon their altar, (as the Lord's table may be called,) where they represent Christ's sacrifice of himself. I heartily wish there were more of all these acts of religion exercised: but if prayer do but hallow our unjust and unrighteous actions; and if alms be but a bribe for the passing by of our drunkenness and debauchery; and if the table of the Lord be but the putting of a compliment put upon him, after we

[g] Isa. i. 11, 12, 13, &c. [h] Iv. 7.

have many ways offended him, and continue still to sin against him: we shall but still maintain and propagate to posterity that false and hypocritical spirit, against which God hath of old expressed so much hatred[i]. But of this, and concerning the ends and uses of sacrifices, more hereafter.

CHAP. VII.

1. *The sins that we forsake must never be again embraced.* 2. *And without this perpetual forsaking, all our strictnesses about religious performances will not avail us, though done out of conscience.* 3. *Let every man make a judgment of himself by what hath been said.*

1. And now I might show, that as God expects a thorough reformation in all things, (which I have already often suggested, and shall more fully ere long demonstrate,) so we must continue in that state, and not put away our sins only for a short time, till we think that God's anger is passed over us, and will not fall down upon us. To be good for a while after we have fasted, confessed our sins, and prayed, will not quite turn away his wrath, though it may defer it. That which God expects is an eternal divorce between us and our sins, and that we seek him with our whole heart, so as to continue in well-doing. For else, with our return again to folly, the stripes which are for the back of fools will return also. And commonly the case is more dangerous, and the disease harder to cure when we do relapse, after we were pretty well recovered; and the rods which before were prepared for us will be turned into scorpions. But the holy story is so clear in this, that he must be much unacquainted with the condition of this people in all those times, that doth not see it; and therefore, knowing every one can furnish himself with proofs enough, if he do but read any one book of their history, I shall herein spare my further labour.

2. I might take occasion likewise here to show, that though all this be done out of conscience, and we would not for any good omit these performances, but out of a kind of honesty we

[i] See the sermon hereto annexed.

observe days of fasting, times of confession, and constant prayer, and have pious intentions in the business; yet this will not procure our good acceptance. But it is plain enough in the temper of this people, as I noted in the beginning of this discourse. You could not have hired them to have laid down these fasts; and when they could not offer sacrifices at the temple, they were very constant in their prayers at those times that they used to be offered: and because they could not in their captivity offer those sacrifices that are commanded to be added on the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles to the constant sacrifices [k], they used certain peculiar prayers (which they retain to this day) which they recited at that time that those sacrifices used to be offered at the temple, calling the time wherein they recited them *musaph*[l], i. e. an 'additament' to their ordinary devotions. And they were very scrupulous in their consciences also, (a thing that many please themselves in very much, as a mark of piety,) and they came to the prophet, as men do now to the minister, for to be resolved. Very loath they were to displease God by the neglect of such good duties, and if it were his pleasure they would still perform them; but alas! poor souls, this was the hypocrisy the Scripture so much speaks of, the finer sort of hypocrisy, that carries so many to hell in a pleasing belief that they are going to heaven. They were serious and zealous in some things, but not in all; and so they did but in good earnest (as we say) and in a more sober way set themselves to cheat their souls. They fasted very severely, they mourned very bitterly, knocked their breasts heartily, confessed devoutly, and prayed earnestly, and sacrificed plentifully; but yet they did not *search and try their ways, to turn again unto the Lord;* they did not *every one put away the evil of their doings;* and so all their zeal in the former things, instead of doing them good, wrought their greater mischief; by making them confidently to account themselves religious persons, and to be angry with the prophets, who would persuade them to the contrary.

3. It were well now, if every one (before he read any further) would examine his own heart, and give himself an account

[k] Numbers xxix.

[l] Buxt. in voc. מוּסָף. [Lex. Chald. Rab. &c. sub. tit. יסף· col. 964.]

whether he have done thus much, as the people of the Jews did, and then whether he have done any more. There are not many, it is like, that have thus fasted, and wept, and prayed, either for their own good, or the good of their nation: and at what a vast distance are they from God's favour, who are not come to the porch of his house; no, are not in the way to become his servants! But I doubt they are very hard to be found (one perhaps of a thousand) that make a conscience not to sin, and to keep a fast every day to God, by the constant practice of mortification, and holy living. If railing and swearing against their enemies, if damning and cursing those that are the cause of our troubles, were the things that would cure our nation, we need not light a candle to find a multitude of such saviours, their deeds of darkness being so open and manifest: and if praying, fasting, and such like things, had been plaisters broad enough for our wounds, they had been long since closed by many pretenders. But as for those who pray for their enemies, and live all their prayers, and exercise daily denial of themselves, though they are not so few but we can see their light shining before men, yet they are scarce enough to testify to all men that their deeds are evil, nor have they been able hitherto to dash the outside religion out of countenance, and to prevail for salvation to be brought to us. I leave it to the private scrutiny of every man's conscience, to find whether or no he be in the number of those that are healing their wounds slightly, or of those that thoroughly amend their ways and doings. And I have said enough to let him know the state of his soul, if he will impartially ransack his heart, and have no mind to put a cheat upon himself. If it be necessary further to assist him, the explication of the second thing which I proposed to be considered will, I hope, contribute some further help to his sincere search, both into his own and the whole nation's condition; unto which I shall now betake myself.

CHAP. VIII.

1. The remedy that God prescribed them by his prophets was a general reformation. 2. The proof of it from them and other things also. 3. How they came notwithstanding to be so negligent in matters of greatest moment. 4. Which were the duties of the second table, as appears out of Zachary. 5. The rulers especially neglectful in these things, and how it came to pass. 6. They might easily have known better, therefore the sin was greater. 7. And their forefathers being corrected for them, made their persisting in them more inexcusable. 8. No peace without these. 9. The sum of many of the following chapters, consisting of four general heads.

1. THE prophets of God were not like the fanatic spirits which are now in the world, that know how to find fault with what is in use, but cannot advise how to amend it; nor like ignorant physicians that cry out upon all vulgar and old wives' medicines, but know not themselves how to apply any that are more proper for the disease: but when they cast so much disrespect upon their fasts and other religious duties, they directed to the true use of them; and when they showed how the false prophets that were among them did but flatter and humour their distemper, they discovered its true nature, and prescribed them a certain and effectual way of cure. And it was no far-fetched medicine to which they advised them; there was no need that they should climb up to heaven, and consult with the planets, or go beyond the sea and traffic with some strange country for it, as we do for drugs to cure our bodily diseases: but the word was nigh them, even in their mouths, and in their hearts, that they might do it. A general reformation of their manners was that to which they exhorted, (if the people expected a general good,) as he that doth not want eyes may read in every leaf of their books. All the exercises of devotion which they used were but in order to this: and without this, all their fasts were but painful provocations; all their confessions but accusations brought in against themselves; all their prayers but the labour of their lungs, which, like bellows, did

make the fire of God's anger burn, and not blow it out. And especially they earnestly beseeched the governors and leaders of the people to amend; who have a manifest influence upon a whole nation, and after whose fashion almost everybody uses to dress himself. For which cause their sins are sometimes alone named in holy writ as procuring God's judgments upon a land, because by their neglect and ill example the rest run more pronely into all wickedness.

2. And therefore Jeremiah commands all the words of his prophecy to be written in one book, and *read to all the people upon their fasting-day*, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (as you may see, Jer. xxxvi. 6), which was perhaps upon the day of expiation, when the great fast was observed. And again the next year, upon occasion of another fast which was proclaimed (ver. 9), he took the same course, and caused Baruch to read his exhortations and threatenings in the ears of all the people of Jerusalem, and those that came likewise out of the cities of Judah to Jerusalem. Hereby teaching them that their fasting and praying was to no purpose, unless they hearkened to God's voice, *by returning every man from his evil way*, which he saith was the only way to obtain forgiveness of their sins, ver. 3 and 7. And they might have understood this, even from the manner of their offering sacrifices, in which they so much trusted. He that brought a burnt offering was to lay his hand upon the head of it before it was slain [m], which was an evident sign (δεῖγμα σαφέστατον), if we may believe Philo (a learned man of that nation), of innocence and an unreprovable life, conforming with the law of nature. For God (saith he) would have him that sacrificeth, first of all to have a mind purified and exercised in pious and profitable principles, and then a life consisting of the most excellent actions; so that he may be able confidently to say out of a pure conscience, when he lays on his hands [n], Αἱ χεῖρες αὗται, οὔτε δῶρον ἐπ' ἀδίκοις ἔλαβον, οὐθ' αἵματος ἀθῴου προσήψαντο, &c.: 'these hands did never receive a bribe to do wrong, nor have they touched innocent blood, nor have they been instruments of any hurt, injury, wound or force, nor have they ministered to any other dishonest action; but they have been serviceable to all things good and profitable, and

[m] Lev. i. 4. [n] L. de Animal. sacrificio idoneis. [tom. ii. p. 241.]

which are approved by the laws, and by all good men.' And he takes notice likewise, that the blood being the soul, as it were, of the living creature, the pouring out of that signified the offering of our souls to God: and that it was therefore poured out round about the altar, because, a circular figure being most perfect, it should signify, 'that the whole soul should be given to him, and that all the mind should cheerfully move and (as it were) dance round in all kind of words, thoughts and deeds, according to the Divine pleasure.'

3. A great wonder then it may be to some, that they should be so defective in matters of the greatest concernment, while they were so curious, even to superstition, in the outside of these services. Especially considering, that on their fasting-days they used to examine offences, and the court sat to punish those that were guilty. To which sense a learned man expounds that place in Joel i. 14[o], *Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders, &c.:* i. e. call a court, who may make inquisition into crimes that have been committed, and see that they be animadverted upon and reformed. And so when Jezebel wrote letters to the city wherein Naboth dwelt, *that they should proclaim a fast*[p], it was as much as to say, Call a court, that may examine and take cognizance of the high sin that Naboth is guilty of. But one true reason, I suppose, that there was not a general reformation in all things made by these judicatures was, because they heard only matters of fact against such laws of Moses to which there was a punishment annexed. Now there was a great penalty inflicted upon all those that did eat upon the great fast a bit of bread, though but as big as a date, and on other fasts the quantity of an olive; but for covetousness, unmercifulness, and such like things, you read of no punishment at all. If a man did not fast, he was to be cut off by excommunication[q]; and besides, by the decrees of the elders, he was to be beaten. And for the breach of any of the nine first commandments, you shall find either death or some great punishment threatened: but for the breach of the tenth commandment, which is, *Thou shalt not covet*, there is no corporal penalty which they incurred, for we find none threatened. And therefore they were more careful

[o] Valent. Schindler. in vocab. צום. [Lex. Pentaglott. col. 1533.]

[p] 1 Kings xxi. 9. [q] Lev. xxiii. 29.

to keep the Sabbath, not to worship idols, &c. (though in these sometimes they were negligent), than to do justly and love mercy: because they might suffer for the one by the hand of the magistrate, but not for the other. Their carnal desires not standing in any awe of any bodily infliction, they took occasion, as the apostle saith[r], to be more licentious, and to *work all manner of concupiscence.*

4. And the sins indeed against this commandment, and those that concern our neighbours, were those which the prophets called chiefly for reformation in, if they expected any good to their land. This I will first of all show you out of the same prophet Zachary, upon whose words I built the former discourse. After he had told them from the Lord, that they had not fasted to him in all the seventy years of their affliction, he proceeds to acquaint them what the true fast was which God always called for and expected. And that he doth, chap. vii. 9, 10, and again chap. viii. 16, 17, which places I desire the reader to take pains to consider. And then I doubt not but he will see good cause for this observation, that the sins they were chiefly guilty of more than others were neglects of the duties of the second table (as we speak); not performing of those offices which one man owes to another, but violent breaking of all those bonds whereby men are tied by God together. They may be reduced to these three heads:

i. Unjust dealing and defrauding one another, by lying, false swearing, devising to overreach and ruin their brethren, chap. vii. 9, 10; viii. 16, 17: *Speak every man the truth to his neighbour, execute the judgment of truth, imagine not evil, love not a false oath.*

ii. Want of mercy and compassion, cruelty, hard and rigid dealing with their neighbours, which is as bad as downright injustice, chap. vii. 9: *Show mercy and compassion every man to his brother.*

iii. Oppression of the poor, and those that could not right themselves against the mighty, chap. vii. 10: *Oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor.*

5. Concerning all which sins you must note these things. That all of the nation were generally guilty of the breach of the tenth Commandment, there being nothing to restrain them

[r] Rom. vii. 8.

from it but only the fear and love of God, and the belief of another life, of which that stiffnecked generation had very little sense. And this covetousness or greediness of the things of this world (which God having liberally promised them, they were the more desirous of) was the root of all that evil which broke out against the other commands of the second table. And their rulers especially were guilty of this, and the rest of the sins that proceeded from it, both because they had fairer occasions to satisfy those desires, and because, though many of their sins against the law were punishable, yet the punishment could be executed upon them who were in the supremacy by none but God. And these sins were the greater in them, because they ought to have rectified others, and given them a better precedent to follow; and the greater in the people likewise, both because they might easily have learnt better, and because they were the sins for which their forefathers had been punished very severely by God.

6. It is an observation of Philo, in the book forementioned[s], that among all those living creatures that were offered in sacrifice, whether aërial or terrestrial, there were none chosen by God but those that were of a gentle and good nature. The dove, of all those that love society and company, is most mild; and the turtle, of those that are naturally solitary, is most easy to be made tame and brought to hand. And among the flocks of fourfooted creatures, those three sorts that were selected for holy use (the oxen, the sheep, and the goats) are of all other the most gentle and inoffensive; one man, or a boy, being sufficient to drive whole herds of them to pasture, and again to bring them back, without any rebellion, to their stalls and folds. And this (saith he) also is a most manifest token of their gentleness, that none of them eat flesh, but all of them grass and herbs, neither are they armed with such hooked claws and talons, nor with such rows of teeth, as other creatures. And besides, they are the most profitable and useful, as well as most innocent and harmless of all others. For the sheep afford clothes for our bodies; the oxen plough the earth, and after it hath yielded its fruit, they tread out the corn; and the hair and skins of goats make clothes for travellers, and soldiers, and

[s] De Animal. sacr. idon. [tom. ii. pp. 237, 8.]

such like persons, whose necessities force them to abide much in the open air. From all which (methinks) we may gather, that they were taught by those things wherein they did most confide, not only to keep good order by justice and uprightness, not using any rapacity or crooked dealing; but also to be tender-hearted, loving, gentle, living in all peaceableness together, and being beneficial and useful unto others. God many times said it, that it was not the flesh or blood of beasts wherein he delighted; and therefore hence they might easily have received documents that he *desired mercy more than sacrifice*, and that they would present him with the qualities of those creatures, rather than with their bodies.

7. But as the proverb tells us, that κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ᾠόν[t]; 'a bad bird hath a bad egg;' so it was with this people: these sins being the faults of their forefathers, they were the more easily inclined to take after them. And though they might have learnt by their ancestors' harms, who were soundly punished for them, yet either by the sweetness of these sins that made them forget the punishment, or by the conceit of the purity of their religion, wherein they excelled their fathers, they trod in the same steps with them, and became guilty of the very same faults which had been so fatally mischievous unto others. For in the second part of this seventh of Zachary God tells them what words he had spoken to their progenitors by the prophets of old, who for these sins, together with two other, (sabbath-breaking and idolatry,) were turned out of the promised land. Other sins indeed there are mentioned by the prophets, but none so much insisted on as these to be the cause of their expulsion out of God's land, and banishment into a strange country, as you shall discern before I have gone much further. Now it seems that their posterity (the men of the captivity) were grown more observant of the sabbath, and greater haters of idolatry; and because of their religious services, which were more pure, took themselves for very good men, though they retained their fathers' injustice and fraud, cruelty and unmercifulness, oppression and violent dealing: which was plainly the case of the Pharisees also, the

[t] [Vide Zenob. Cent. iv. proverb. 82. et alios apud Gaisford, Paræm. Græc. pp. 61, 145, 196, 331.]

posterity of those persons in our Saviour's time, before this their last and long dispersion. They were notoriously guilty of these sins more than any other, whilst they could not be challenged with any idolatrous practices, or with neglect of the sabbath day, no, nor with less strictness in any other religious performances. Under their religion they cloaked their unrighteousness, and made all their piety good for nothing, being stained with covetousness, oppression of the widows, and violence toward those that had no helpers, with such like wickedness.

8. From all which we may be bold to affirm still, that God proceeds in such a method of justice with nations, that where he finds these sins to remain, it is in vain to fast and pray, and cry to God for mercy, yea to reform in other matters which concern God's worship and service. And yet the most noise is commonly made about these, out of hope their prayers and preachings, and other religious offices, together with the asserting of these from superstition and impure mixtures, will drown the cry of injustice, cruelty, blood, oppression, and such like sins, which are destructive of all human society. But far be it from the Lord and Governor of the world to suffer himself to be fawned upon by such persons, who, while they cry out against superstition, are the most superstitious. For out of a great fear and dread of God, they crouch unto and speak him fair, and lay great stress upon some small things wherein he hath given greater liberty; and they hope that because of all this he will wink and connive at their evil doings to their neighbours, of whom they stand in no awe at all. But, as I said, he that loves good order, and rules the nations in righteousness and truth, will punish for these things as severely as for the other; and without reformation in them, he will hold no nation guiltless, nor let them long live in peace. Of the which that we may be the more sensible, I shall digest what remains concerning the state of this people, in these particular considerations:

9. First, I shall make it appear that this of old was the fast which God required of their fathers by the prophets, viz. that they should forsake those sins that I have mentioned; and that he every where urges, even in the most reforming times before the captivity, their growing more just and merciful in-

their dealings, and their practising those duties which arise from the respect that one man hath to another.

ii. Then I will manifest, that after their return from the captivity of Babylon, still these things more than any else are insisted upon, as those they were deficient in and should amend.

iii. That these are noted as the wasting and destroying sins of a people, though there should be no other.

iv. That where men expect peace and settlement, quiet and removal of judgments from a nation, they must have an especial care to reform in these particulars. And because nations are most commonly defective in these things, and are apt to imagine that some religious duties are all, or the greatest matters that God expects, therefore I shall insert such observations in this discourse, as shall both discover this mistake, and the ground of it.

CHAP. IX.

1. *The first thing opened, how that all the old prophets required amendment of their manners in point of justice and mercy; proved from Hosea.* 2 *and* 3. *From Isaiah.* 4. *From Micah.* 5. *From Habakkuk.* 6. *From Zephaniah.* 7. *From Jeremiah.* 8 *and* 9. *From Ezekiel, in all whose prophecies many places are expounded.* 10 *and* 11. *Their impudence in mocking at the prophets who reproved these sins, and one reason of it.* 12. *The ten tribes sick of the same disease. Four things proposed as observable from this discourse.*

1. THAT the things which Zachariah speaks of (in the places now mentioned) were the same which the former prophets had mainly insisted upon, and constantly called for, is the first thing to be cleared. And if we follow the interpretation which Solomon Jarchi gives of that place, Hosea i. 2, I must begin with the testimony of the prophet Hosea, to whom the word of the Lord came, before any of those whose prophecies are extant in the scripture. For so he saith some expound those words, *The beginning of the word of the Lord*, to signify that he was the first of the four prophets that prophesied in the days of king

Uzziah. And the word that he saith is this, *The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood*[u]. And in ch. vi. 8, 9, he accuseth them of violence, murder, and robbery, and chap. vii. 1, of falsehood and theft; and chap. xii. 7, 8, of their cheating and oppression, which he could not make them believe, because they prospered and thrived in it. These places it is likely may most of all concern Ephraim, i. e. the ten tribes, as the greatest part of his prophecy doth. But you may observe, that though he find most fault with them for their idolatry, yet these other sins had an hand also in their ruin. And as for Judah, (whose state I shall chiefly inquire into, because there was the house of God,) though they were not always so bad in regard of idolatry, and did not in the time of their good princes *compass God about with that deceit, but were faithful with the saints*, (as he saith, chap. xi. 12;) yet they were guilty of the other deceit, which was of a very destructive nature, as we shall see if we do but consult the rest of the prophets that lived in the same time with Hosea.

2. And the prophet Isaiah (one of the royal family, as the Hebrews think, and so writes in a most majestic and stately style of these matters) offers himself to be a witness in the very first chapter of his vision; where he finds no fault with them for their idolatry, nor questions the legality of their sacrifices, nor charges them with neglect of praying to him, nor blames them for withholding of his due oblations from him: no, on the contrary, he acknowledges a *multitude of sacrifices* of the best and fattest, that he was *full of burnt offerings*, that they observed all their *appointed feasts and solemn meetings*, and made *many prayers to him*. But then he tells them[x], that he could not endure to look upon them *when they spread their hands towards heaven, because those hands were full of blood*. And therefore the thing that he calls for is[y], that they would *wash and cleanse their hands* of that *blood* which had besmeared them, that they would *put away their injustice, oppression, unmercifulness*, and such like sins: and then if they

[u] Hos. iv. 1, 2. [x] Isa. i. 11, 15. [y] Ver. 16, 17, 18.

came and prayed to him, he would speak friendly to them, and have a parley with them, and do away those bloody crimson sins, and restore them by their repentance and amendment to a snow-like whiteness, as if they had been as innocent as lambs, and not so ravenous as lions. And observe to whom it is that he speaks, viz. to the *rulers* first (who were like to Sodom) and then to the *people* who were not far distant from them in this wickedness, (being like to Gomorrah[z].) I say, *to the rulers first*, who had the deepest share in this guilt, and were the ringleaders in these sins, as will appear to him that shall but cast his eye upon the 21st 22nd 23rd 26th verses, which I shall forbear to transcribe.

3. I will not yet dismiss this witness, who speaks so fully and closely to the business before us. Be pleased then to consider those woes which he denounces against them *that decree unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor, that widows might be their prey, and that they might rob the fatherless*[a], and then tell yourselves what sins they were much guilty of. To which add chap. xxx. 12, 13, and seriously read the lviiith chapter, ver. 4, 6, 7, and you will need none to expound to you what reformation it was that he expected upon their fasting days. In the lixth chapter likewise he gives us a large description of the temper of this people, complaining of these sins as the only cause they were not delivered. *Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that he cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that he cannot hear*, ver. 1; that is, he can deliver you from Sennacherib's army, as well as from former enemies, and is as willing to hear your prayers as ever, if he could but hear any good of you. *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, &c.*, ver. 2. You are so monstrously unjust and deceitful, unmerciful and cruel, (as you may read, ver. 3, 4, &c.,) that he cannot but hide his face from you. There was nothing but mischievous plots and designs which they had against each other to be found among them. They were like a cockatrice that lays poisonous eggs, or like to spiders that make nets to catch those things that are weaker than them-

[z] Isa. i. 9. [a] Chap. x. 1, 2.

selves, ver. 5. And if a man did not find out their plot which was laid, but did eat of their egg, (i. e. believed all they said, and took them for honest men,) it was certain death to him, and he was utterly undone. And if he did smell it out and crushed it, then a viper did break forth, i. e. they would never endure him, but be always vexing of him and seeking to destroy him, ib. ver. 5. A man could not be safe by any means among his neighbours: if he trusted them they would be his ruin; if he did not trust them, that was pretence enough still to endeavour his ruin. Read also ver. 13, 14, 15 of that chapter, and observe that in the 16th verse he saith, that he could not find so much as one man that should atone him; not one man whose hands were clean enough from unjust gains and fraudulent dealing to be lifted up to heaven for them. And therefore he rose up only out of his own great zeal, and for his glory's sake to bring salvation, ver. 16, 17, 18. *And when the enemies came in like a flood,* (i. e. when Sennacherib with his great host overflowed the land even as far as the neck, which was Jerusalem,) *the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard against him,* ver. 19. He that will take the pains duly to consider these places will find so many other bordering upon them to the same purpose, that he will be more sensible of the truth of that which I affirm; and I shall have occasion to call in the assistance of many of them in other parts of this discourse.

4. Let us next hear what information the prophet Micah will give us concerning this matter, who lived in the same time with Isaiah, and speaks still more plainly (if it be possible so to do) against these sins, as very predominant in them and their rulers. The woe in chap. ii. 1, 2. (which I beseech you read) is against those who, because they had power in their hands, contrived how to greaten themselves, though with the ruin of others. If they saw but a fair field or house which they coveted, it was made a prey to their lust, and they took it away by violence, though it was the man's inheritance, and tended to his utter undoing. And though together with him they undid his posterity, and together with their bodies brought their souls to ruin, yet they sacrificed them all to their covetousness, and cast both women and children out of their houses, making them thereby become idolaters. Which may be the

meaning of that phrase, ver. 9, *From their children have they taken away my glory for ever;* i. e. by their cruelty they have made them fly to strange countries, and to lose their religion; or they have been the cause of their captivity, and carrying into a land where God was not worshipped. Yea, so ravenous and greedy were they, that they were not ashamed to strip stark naked, and leave them neither upper nor inner garment, who were harmless and innocent, neither intending wrong to others, nor fearing any from them, as you read, ver. 8. And in chap. iii. 1, 2, 3. he speaks of most barbarous and butcherly actions, the flaying and peeling of the people to the very bones. And as if that did not make them miserable enough, they would have no pity on those poor skeletons, but broke their very bones, and chopped them in pieces, as one doth when he puts flesh in a pot; which is as much as to say, they utterly devoured them, and eat them up. They did abhor judgment, and pervert all equity (ver. 9.), and (which is to be observed) at that very time they built up Zion and Jerusalem *with this blood and iniquity*, ver. 10, i. e. they repaired or enlarged the great city; they adorned the king's palace which was on mount Zion, and in all likelihood they *beautified the temple,* (for that is mentioned together with these two, ver. 12,) with this robbery and murder that they committed. They were reformers of things amiss or decayed in God's worship, at the cost and charges of many a poor innocent, that they had rent in pieces, and shared amongst them. For that these words were spoken in the times of reformation, you may learn from Jer. xxvi. 18, where we are told that Micah made this threatening which is mentioned, ver. 12, of *making Zion like a ploughed field, &c.* in the days of Hezekiah, who you know repented of the evil his fathers had done, and so turned away the evil in his time. Now what is all this which Micah saith, but what the prophet Isaiah hath already told us, chap. i. ver. 10, 21, 23, and again, chap. iii. ver. 13, 14, 15, where God reproves the elders and great ones for *beating his people to pieces, and grinding the faces of the poor,* whose cause he saith he was come to plead: the rulers then being so bad, there is little reason to expect much justice or mercy among the people, who also oppressed and offered violence one to another, as far as their power would reach. For proof of

which, spare not to read Micah vi. 10, 11, 12, and likewise the six first verses of the seventh chapter, which tells us largely of the *general cruelty, covetousness, treachery, &c. both of the princes, and all the people, though never so nearly related one to another.* Which was so great and universal, that it was as hard to find a merciful and a just man, as to find a bunch of grapes *after the gleanings of the vintage.* And therefore in the sixth chapter, ver. 6, &c. God by the same prophet *calls not for their sacrifices and religious services,* (in which it seems they were frank enough, and could have been contented to have put themselves to any expense, so they might but quietly have kept their covetous, griping and devouring lusts and desires,) *but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.*

5. And in the days of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, things still grew worse, and proceeded to a greater height of injustice and cruelty. For as he is noted for a most gross idolater, so likewise for a great shedder of innocent blood, wherewith he filled Jerusalem [b]; such violence, iniquity, grievances, perverting of judgment there was in his days, that the prophet Habakkuk (who some think was one of those that God sent to admonish him [c]) could not endure to behold it, and seems to be wearied with crying to God against it, as you may see if you read Habakkuk i. 2, 3, 4. Whereupon God threatens to raise up (with such speed that nobody would believe it) the Chaldean nation to destroy them, ver. 5. And this he did not long after the time of Manasseh, when the Chaldeans brought the Assyrian power under their feet, of which only the Jews stood in fear.

6. If we draw nearer to the time of the first captivity into Babylon, by the hands of those Chaldeans which they little dreamed of, we shall hear no new sermons, but the very same sins still reproved. Zephaniah will be our informer in this matter, who lived in the days of Josiah, a good prince, and very zealous to reform things amiss in the worship of God. With him it is manifest (from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8.) the nobles of the realm joined to purge the land from idolatry, though we may guess from Zeph. i. 4, 5, 6, that many of the people did not

[b] 2 Kings xxi. 16; xxiv. 4. [c] 2 Kings xxi. 10.

affect their proceedings. And yet if you do but read the five first verses of the third chapter, you will easily discern how shameless these very reformers were in their unjust and violent dealing, and that they would rather part with any thing (even their idols) than these rich and thriving sins. And therefore the prophet exhorts those that had any of those rare virtues in them, any mercifulness and righteousness, that they would go on to practise them, and in those ways to seek the Lord, telling them that it was probable (but not certain) that they might be secured in that deluge of misery that was like to overflow the whole land, ch. ii. 3. And afterwards, ch. iii. 12, 13, he prophesies that *the poor and the afflicted* (they that have been oppressed and stripped naked by the great and rich) were the persons that should escape and be left in the land, when all those men's possessions were taken from them, and that they should be such a remnant *as should not do iniquity*, nor speak lies, nor have a deceitful tongue in their mouth, but should trust in God, and not in these evil arts.

7. Jeremiah also, who prophesied in the days of the same Josiah, and likewise of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, in the time of both the first and second captivity, and afterward also; he, I say, speaks the very same words, as will be very evident to those who will do themselves so much right, for the understanding of this truth, as to ponder these places of his prophecy. He tells us in ch. iii. 10, *that Judah did not return to God with her whole heart, but feignedly;* which words were spoken (as you may see, ver. 6.) in the days of Josiah, who had made a *covenant to serve the Lord with all their heart, and all their soul, and all the people stood unto it*[d]. This is the returning which the prophet saith was but feigned, because, notwithstanding this great profession, they were not sincerely out of love with their sins, nor did with all their heart, as they pretended, abhor them. For he tells us, ch. vii. 9, 10, that many of them, though they came to the house of God to worship in the time of this reformation, yet had an altar likewise in some private corner for Baal. And beside this, they were all guilty of cheating, oppression, stealing, false witnessing, and all manner of injustice, as you may see there, ver. 4, 5, 6, 9. In-

[d] 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

somuch that he saith, ver. 11, *the house of God was become a den of robbers*, a mere nest of thieves, where a crew of oppressors met together, thinking to expiate for all by their flattering devotions. And ch. ix., from the second verse to the ninth, he bewails these sins against our neighbours, and these alone, with a sad and compassionate heart, they being the very sins that undid them, as he notes ver. 6, (*through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord*), and as I shall ere long demonstrate. For so general were these sins, that there was not so much as a man that did justice to be found, though the salvation of the nation had lain upon it, ch. v. 1. And though God did smite them grievously, yet they would not amend, ver. 3; but all hardened their faces as a rock in these evil courses. The poor indeed one could not expect much from, and they might either be tempted by their needs to live by lies, or they might be ignorant of the law, and have less understanding what judgment was, ver. 4; but when he went to the great ones, who had better advantages of knowledge than the other, he found that they were lawless also, and would be bound by no obligations of law or conscience to their duty, ver. 5. And therefore he saith of the city Jerusalem, ch. vi. 6, that *she was wholly oppression;* and ver. 7, that a continual stream of wickedness run down her streets, so that he could see nothing but the sad spectacles of grieved and wounded persons.

8. Ezekiel likewise will witness largely to this truth, who prophesied in the days of Jehoiakim, in the time of the first captivity, chap. i, 1, 2. This person saw the glory of the Lord which dwelt between the cherubims upon the ark, departing from the holy place and from the nation by several steps and degrees. First it went from off the cherubims where it used to sit, viz. from the mercy seat, which was in the west part of the temple, and it *stood over the threshold of the house*, chap. x. 4. Then it mounted upon the back of the cherubims, (which were that chariot described by him chap. i.,) and they carried it to the east gate of the house, at which the people came to worship, ver. 18, 19, 20. But there being nothing but mischief and violence to be found among those that came to worship, though princes of the people, (chap. xi. 1, 2, 6, 7,) they carry it into the midst of the city, as you may gather from chap. xi. 23. But the city being full of the blood of the slain, as you may see

in those verses 6, 7, the cherubims lift up their wings, and carry it away still further off unto the mountain that was on the east side of the city, (ver. 22, 23,) which was the mount of Olives. And from thence it went quite away from his sight, as he saith, ver. 24, which signifies that God forsook the land because of their iniquity.

9. Now that their iniquity for which he forsook it was the same with that which I have mentioned, and that they were but little amended after the first captivity, you may see by that description which he makes of those persons that God would account righteous, and accept to life, and of those who were so wicked that they should be destroyed. For this you must read chap. xviii., from the third verse to the nineteenth, and chap. xxxiii. ver. 14, 15, 16, where, though he mention their idolatry, yet he enlarges far more upon these other sins, and the contrary virtues. But especially he notes the rulers as most guilty in this kind, and therefore spends one whole chapter in their reproof. For by *shepherds*, chap. xxxiv., you may understand ποίμενες λαοῦ, the 'governors of the people, and those that bear office in the land. So the princes and captains of Chaldæa that destroyed Jerusalem are called *shepherds*, and their subjects their *flocks*[e] and *pastors*[f]. Now these shepherds of Israel, that should have had a care of all the flock, they did not *tondere*, but *deglubere*, not 'shear them,' but 'flea them,' and pull their skins off from them; yea, they tore their very flesh, if they were fat and rich, ver. 3. And whereas they should have been a guard to the people from wolves and devourers, if any poor weak man of the flock was broken or wounded by the great beasts, they never took care by right judgment to redress their grievances, but rather exercised more cruelty upon them, ver. 4. The richer sort imitated them, and did violence to their poor neighbours, who could get no relief by the law, which these shepherds did not execute; and therefore God himself saith that he would come and *judge between the fat cattle and the lean*, ver. 18, 19, 20. Read also chap. xii. 19, and chap. xxii. 6, 7, 9, 12, where God complains of the princes and people both, and saith, ver. 13, that because of this *he had smitten his hands at their dishonest gain*

[e] Jer. vi. 3. [f] xii. 10; xlix. 19, 20.

which they had made, &c. Which was as if a man should clap his hands at his enemies, and say, I will be revenged, you shall not escape so with your wickedness. They thought that those whom God had delivered into captivity were the sinners that had provoked him, and therefore were cast out, but that they who still remained in the land were his good people, and dearly beloved of him. Whereas the Lord saith, that he had sent them out for their good, and would be a little sanctuary unto them, chap. xi. 15, 16, which is exactly conformable to what Jeremiah saith, chap. xxiv.; where he compares those of the first captivity to *good figs,* and they that remained to *naughty figs,* that could not be eaten they were so bad; and saith that the former he had a respect unto, and would own them for his, but the latter he would make a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse in all places whither they should be driven.

For their sins must needs be the greater, in that they did not reform after such a fair warning given them by the captivity of a part of their nation, not above twelve year before; no, nor when the Chaldeans were just ready to take their city again, and destroy them utterly, as you may note from Ezek. xxxiii. 21.

10. These things they were so settled and rooted in, that they made but a mock of those that came to reprove them, and threaten God's judgments upon them. They did but laugh when the prophets told them that these sins would destroy them, and that the king of Babylon would come like a *seething pot* to scald them[g]. *We must be the flesh, and this city is the caldron,* say they, by way of flout[h], when they were building houses; and therefore we had best build in this place, that is, not near the city where we are to be sodden. And therefore the prophet applies this saying to another purpose, and tells them, that since they had *multiplied their slain* in that city, and *filled the streets* with them[i], he was sure that those murdered persons might well be compared to flesh, and their city to the caldron, where it had soaked and been sodden in its own blood[k]; and that their saying did better set forth their own wickedness than their punishment, which they would not believe should come. For because of their bloodiness, he tells

[g] Jer. i. 13. [h] Ezek. xi. 3. [i] Ver. 6. [k] Ver. 7.

them they should be slain, not in the city, (where then they hoped for security,) but in the border of the land of Israel, whither they fled, hoping that way to save themselves when the city was taken[l]. But God had said by Jeremiah, not only that he would send fishers to fish them, and take them in a net, (which was done in the siege of Jerusalem,) but hunters also, that should pursue them, and ferret them out of every hole, as they did Zedekiah and his men of war[m].

11. And so indeed Jeremiah tells us they jeered at him, using to say to him when they met him in the street, *What is the burden of the Lord*[n]*?* As much as to say, How now, prophet, what evil do you threaten us withal? What is the next mischief that we must expect? The word *burden* in the prophetical language signifies some great misery and calamity that should oppress them, and under which they were like to sink, unless they repented; and many of them begin their prophecies of destruction with that word, as every one that reads them very well knows. Now the people often hearing this word from his mouth, used to say in a mocking manner when they met him, What is the burden or punishment that you threaten us withal? And they did this in such a contemptuous manner, that God threatens that *every man's word should be his burden*[o], i. e. that every one should be punished who used this language. One reason of which strange impudence might be, that they had gotten so much riches by this covetousness and injustice, that they thought they could hire the Ethiopians to come and help them in a time of need, when some burden was like to fall upon them: see Isa. xxxi. 1, 2, 3, and Jer. xvii. 5, 6. From the latter of which prophecies we may gather, that they pretended not to trust in man and the arm of flesh, ver. 9; but God saith in the 10th verse, that he knew their deceitful heart well enough, and threatens, ver. 11, that all those who had gotten their goods unjustly should be robbed of them by the hands of the Chaldeans, as a bird is of her eggs which she never hatcheth. And this covetousness I conceive might be the reason that they observed the Sabbath no better, ver. 20, 21, and counted it a burden to them when they did observe it, and carry no burden through their gates, Amos viii.

[l] Ezek. xi. 10, 11. [m] Jer. xvi. 16. [n] xxiii. 33. [o] Ver. 36.

5, 6. Which made God deliver up all their treasures (as I said) wherein they confided, and to *search Jerusalem with candles,* so that they should not be able to save a single penny in any secret hole[p]. The king of Babylon robbed them, as the king of Assyria glorieth that he had done all nations, of their goods; *and his hand found as a nest the riches of this people*[q].

12. I should be too tedious, should I write all that may be said in this argument. The ten tribes were guilty of the very same sins, and this was the voice of the prophets to them, as well as to Judah, that they would reform themselves, not only in their idolatrous worship, but in these matters also. But for this I will refer the reader to the prophet Micah, whose vision was concerning Samaria and Jerusalem both[r]; and to the prophet Amos, whose vision chiefly concerned Israel, and who saw what was coming upon the kine of Bashan, *who did oppress the poor and crush the needy*[s]. And I will only observe four things to you, which will be useful to take into your consideration, and will more illustrate all this discourse; and so pass to the second of those general heads that I propounded in the end of the last chapter to be spoken unto.

CHAP. IX.

1. *The first observable, that these sins were committed when they were reformed in church matters.* 2. *The second, that their knowing of themselves to be reformed in those, was the ground of their hypocrisy.* 3. *Proved out of Micah, Jeremiah, and others.* 4. *Their confidence in this opinion of their being God's favourites, though they lived wickedly.* 5. *Which made them not profit by God's judgments on their forefathers.* 6. *And upon the ten tribes.* 7. *And when God came nearer to them, and sent captive a part of themselves.* 8. *So far they were from amendment by it, that they grew riotous.* 9. *Yea, after the second captivity they continued in these sins, out of a persuasion they were pious persons.* 10. *The Israelites ruined by the same deceit.*

[p] Zeph. i. 12, 13. [q] Isa. x. 13, 14. [r] Micah i. 1. [s] iv. 1.

11. *And the Pharisees in after-times.* 12. *And the Jews and Christians at this day. Many places of holy writ are explained through the whole.*

1. And first of all, you cannot but take notice, from what hath been said, that even when they were reformed in their Divine worship and service, when idolatry and superstition were cast out of the church, yet these great abuses, these crying sins, remained among them. The temple was purged; the priests and Levites were sanctified; sacrifices according to the law were offered; the Passover celebrated in such a manner, that scarce ever was the like seen from its first institution; the brazen serpent was broken; and all this by the consent of the princes and rulers, who yet continued thus unjust, cruel, and devouring, as both Isaiah and Micah, (who lived in Hezekiah's time,) and Zephaniah, (who lived in Josiah's,) have informed us very largely. Do but consult 2 Chron. xxix. and xxx., and you will find that Hezekiah the king and the princes ordered the worship of God; and chap. xxxv, where you may behold the princes in Josiah's time giving at the Passover an offering of two thousand six hundred small cattle and three hundred oxen; when, notwithstanding, these were the men who, *like lions and wolves, tare the people in pieces, and gnawed the very bones, after they had done with the flesh, making them as bare and poor as ever they could,* according as Zephaniah hath told us. I hold it unnecessary to lead you through all their story for the proof of this, seeing I have so often reflected light upon it in my passage through the former discourse.

2. And therefore I shall entreat you rather attentively to consider a second observation of great moment, which is this; that herein consisted a main ground of their hypocrisy and deceiving of themselves, which brought them to utter ruin. A man must wink very hard that doth not see the duties of justice and mercifulness, of pity and favourable dealing, &c., written in capital letters, both upon his own heart and in the book of God; and one would not think it possible that a man should have such strange arts of abusing himself, as to make himself believe that he is a good man, and in a safe condition, while he lives in the violation of all these known principles.

There must be some notable blind, some very plausible trick, that can cast such a mist before his eyes, and juggle him into such a conceited belief, which here (I think) we have discovered. They had high thoughts of their divine worship, and looked upon their religious services as hugely pleasing unto God, and they knew themselves to be very earnest (it is like) in this piece of reformation; and so they judged themselves to be the people of God, the right worship being restored, the altar being cleansed, and the temple repaired by their means. Now their great zeal in these matters, and their forwardness to introduce the true religion after so much idolatry, made them overlook these little trifling things (as men account them) of justice and equity, of mercy and compassion; and to hope that God would do so also, and not be angry with such a reformed people for a small matter. What, I pray you, (might they say in their hearts to a prophet,) will not God give leave to a people that hate idols, and observe diligently his sabbaths, and offer him his constant sacrifices in the right prescribed manner, to get a little for themselves in the world, and to use all arts of growing rich, after they have been so faithful and liberal to him? Will he fall out with such good friends of his upon so poor an occasion? Cannot he be pleased that they give him his due, and defraud him of none of his right, though they be not so exact in their justice one to another? Must he needs take notice what they do among themselves, when they hope he hath no reason to complain that he is neglected in any piece of his own worship? Will it not satisfy him that they are so zealous in those great and weighty concernments of his, which had been so long disregarded, and for which they had been so often threatened? Yes, surely, thought they, we are in a safe condition, God is well apaid, and we need not trouble ourselves any further, but confidently wait upon him, that he will be with us and save us.

3. Thus the prophet Micah tells us they found a way to deceive themselves, as you may read, chap. iii. 11, *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet they will lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.* They would needs be God's favourites, and thrust themselves upon him, and be confident of

his goodness to them, though they were conscious to themselves of all this wickedness. They cried, *The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord,* as long as those of Ephesus cried, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians.* And in this temple-worship and religion they trusted, thinking that God was fixed to that place, and that the temple would secure them, as certainly as the Trojans thought themselves out of all danger while they could keep their Palladium. And therefore Jeremiah bids them not trust in those *lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord are these;* i. e. not hearken to the false prophets, who told them that they were God's temple, a separated people, an holy nation, among whom God did dwell; for all this would not avail them, and they were *words that would not profit,* or give them any help, ver. 8; yet they dreamt, that as long as they kept their holy place pure, they need not fear the taking of their city: just as the heathens thought their fortresses could never be won, while they could keep the good genius of the place from being charmed away out of it. And so an excellent linguist[t] takes that word הֵמָּה, or *these,* to refer not to the persons, but to the several parts of the temple; which agrees well with the words foregoing, ver. 2, where the prophet is bid to stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and to proclaim these words among the rest, *Trust not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord are these.* As if he had pointed with his finger to the buildings of the house of God, and said to those that came to worship, Do not deceive yourselves in a vain confidence that these will save you, as if God were bound to these dwellings. But yet they came and stood before God in his house, (as he saith, ver. 10,) and said, *We are delivered,* and that made them do all those forementioned abominations. And therefore he gives them that reproof which you read ver. 11, where he asks them, *Is my house become a den of robbers in your eyes? behold I have seen it, saith the Lord;* i. e. Do you imagine to fly to the temple, as thieves to their den, and think all is safe, if you do but offer me some sacrifices? No, you are mistaken; I see what you are well enough, and you cannot so deceive me. It is very plain that they were confident none of those things should

[t] Lud. de Dieu. [in loc. inter Animadvers. in Vet. Test. p. 579.]

come upon them which the prophets threatened; but gave God the lie through his messengers' ears, as you may read, Jer. v. 11, 12, 13; and therefore, seeing they were so unjust, as he tells us there, ver. 1, 2, and ver. 25, 26, 27, 28, there must be something whereby they strengthened their hands in this wickedness. And he tells us what it was in that chapter, ver. 14, when he calls the temple *the house wherein they trusted.* They did swear by the name of God, and pretended great reverence to it; but it was not in truth and righteousness, Isaiah xlviii. 1, they styled themselves by the name of *the holy city,* ver. 2, (viz. the men of Jerusalem, the people of Sion,) and they stayed themselves on the God of Israel; whereas they were stout-hearted and far from righteousness, as you may read Isa. xlvi. 12. But they offered to God sacrifices out of their unlawful gains, and this they thought would bribe him to take no notice, as you may gather from Isa. lxi. 8: *The Lord loveth judgment; I hate robbery for burnt offerings.* And so the vulgar Latin renders these words, Jer. xi. 15. *Numquid carnes sanctæ auferent a te malitias tuas in quibus gloriata es? Dost thou think thy holy flesh* (i. e. thy sacrifices) *shall take away the wickednesses wherein thou gloriest?* As if he should say, Thou canst not expiate for thy beloved sins by making God many oblations, as thou thinkest to do; no, never dream of it, for it is a very deceit.

4. Yet knowing themselves to be very zealous in their worship, they have the confidence to come and challenge God, as though they had wrong done them, and had hard measure at his hands in not being saved by him from their enemies. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul and thou takest no knowledge*[u] *?* Do we not seek thee daily? Do we not delight to know thy ways, and take pleasure in approaching to thee? Do we not fast and pray and put ourselves to a great deal of pains in thy services? Why then dost thou take no notice of us? How canst thou deny such importunate suitors to thee for thy favour? It seemed strange to them that he should not love such persons, and condescend to their requests, and they thought they might justly plead their cause with him, and that

[u] Isa. lviii. 3.

it would appear they were very innocent. But God there tells them (as you have seen) what was still wanting, and their not observing of such lessons made them run into such a dangerous mistake. And so the same prophet speaks in God's name to them of the captivity, (by way of prediction,) as though they were dissatisfied about the justice of God's dealing with them. And he asks them, *Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away*[y]: i. e. You complain as if I had, without any great cause, or merely for my pleasure, put away your nation which was married to me, as you use to do with your wives. You make as if I had sold you, because I was in want of something that you could not furnish me withal, as you use to do your children in case of poverty and distress[z]. But what proof can you make of this? produce the bill of divorce, if you can, and let it be seen that you were unjustly put away. No no, it was for your *iniquities*, your horrid injustice and violence, that you were sold into the hands of cruel men; and it was for your *transgressions*, your *whoredom*, by idolatry, that I put you away. I may rather complain of you (as it is ver. 2.), and ask, *Wherefore when I came was there no man? when I called there was none to answer.* Strange it was that there should be no pious and upright men to be found among them; but stranger it is that these wicked men should have the boldness to argue with God, and plead their own innocence. Sure the reason was none else but that which I have assigned; they had been lately reformed; a little before the captivity the worship of God was much amended in the days of Josiah, and they were not all fallen back into so gross idolatry as formerly they had maintained. This, this was the very thing that immediately ruined them; this was it that would not let them see the mischief that was coming upon them for their oppression, violence, and such like sins, nor acknowledge it just when it was come. They held fast this deceit (Jer. viii. 7,) and so refused to return.

5. And this, I conceive, might make them interpret all the

[y] Isa. l. 1. [z] Exod. xxi. 7. 2 Kings iv. 1.

instances of God's displeasure against others, to the encouragement of themselves in their evil ways, rather than to the awakening of their hearts to repentance. Ahaz, the predecessor of their good king Hezekiah, was delivered into the hand of the king of Syria, who smote him, and carried a great multitude captive into Damascus: and into the hand of the king of Israel, who made a strange slaughter among them, destroying an hundred and twenty thousand valiant men in one day, and carrying away captive two hundred thousand, men, women, and children, which God commanded to be sent home again, and gave more time unto for to amend, 2 Chron. xxviii. 4, 5, 6. The Edomites also and the Philistines came and laid them waste, and brought them very low; the king of Assyria likewise, who was hired to relieve them, did but more distress and not at all strengthen them, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. But they could easily impute all this evil which befell their fathers unto their idolatry, *their offering incense unto other gods, and forsaking the God of their fathers,* ver. 25. As for themselves, they were returned to him, and hated the strange worship with all their hearts. How could they be in such peril of being destroyed, now they amended those very faults for which their fathers were scourged? This justice and righteousness which the melancholy prophets called for were (they might think) but heathen virtues. The pure worship of God was that which distinguished them from all others, and would secure them without any of that admired pagan morality. And so the prophet Ezekiel observes, that they were worse than their heathen neighbours that were round about them; for they followed all their bad examples in worshipping idols, but not their good in doing justly and uprightly. *You have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you*[a].

6. And when God proceeded further in his judgments, and sent all the ten tribes into captivity in the days of Hezekiah, as you may read 2 Kings xvii., this did not at all make them to stand in awe, and not to sin. For the answer was ready, they worshipped the calves in Bethel, the remnant of them laughed the

[a] Ezek. v. 7.

messengers of Hezekiah to scorn, and mocked them who were sent to invite them to join in the reformation[b]: and therefore God cast them out of their land, and gave it unto others. But how any such evil could betide those that were the reformed, they could not tell how to imagine. What, would you have them believe that Jerusalem is no better than Samaria, and that the house of David shall not be more regarded than the house of Jeroboam or Jehu? Will not the Lord Jehovah, whom they worshipped, do more for them than Baal or the Egyptian gods could do for their brethren? Yes surely, they were God's beloved people, and no evil should come near unto them. They were *haughty because of his holy mountain*, as the prophet Zephany speaks[c]; they bragged of God's presence with them, and of the care they had to keep his house clean from all heathenish impurities; and by this means they hugged themselves in their injustice, and flattered their souls into a conceit of their acceptance with God and security under him, though they had seen such calamities befall others. Nay, so sottish were they, that when they grew idolatrous again after all their reformations, yet because they retained some devotion, they said they were innocent, as you may see Jer. ii. 33, &c. *Why trimmest thou thyself to seek love? Therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.* Or, as the Vulgar reads it, *Quid niteris bonam ostendere viam tuam ad quærendam dilectionem, &c.*, i. e. 'Why dost thou endeavour to purge and clear thyself, as though thy way was good and thou hadst no spot in thee, hoping hereby to obtain my favour?' whereas thou hast not only done evil thyself, but taught it others also: and besides thy idolatry (spoken of before), *in thy skirts* (or wings) *is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents*, which is so plain to be seen that one need not search for it, ver. 34. As upon the wings of an eagle or such a bird of prey one shall find the blood of those lesser birds that they have devoured, so there were manifest marks and tokens every where to be seen of their cruelty and injustice. And yet they have the face to come and say, ver. 35. *I am innocent, surely his anger shall be turned from me.* The worship of God was that which they pretended, and they would not grant that

[b] 2 Chron. xxx. 6, &c. [c] Zeph. iii. 11.

they had gone after Baalim (as you may read ver. 23), and so they thought they might stand upon their own justification, not fearing the guilt of any other sin but idolatry.

7. Well; but when part of Judah herself is gone into captivity, then sure we shall hear a new story and find a great change wrought in them. One would not imagine but that he should read how they were convinced, when they saw God's judgments come not only to their gates, but within their walls. But if you look into the prophet Ezekiel, you shall see that they who were left behind, and not yet carried away, remained in the very same sins, and supported themselves with the same false hopes. Besides those places formerly mentioned, I shall add these that speak of their injustice and violence. In chap. vii. 10, 11, he saith the day of their destruction was near; the *rod* for their backs did *blossom*, and therefore would ere long bring forth its bitter fruits; which they might easily gather from hence, because *pride had budded among them, and violence was risen up to a rod of wickedness*, i. e. as their sins increased and grew to a greater height, so would their punishment grow more ripe, and no man *should be able to strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life*, ver. 13. Their *silver and gold*, he saith, *should not deliver them*, ver. 19; but because of their *bloody crimes*, he would bring the *worst of the heathen* to possess their dwellings, ver. 23, 24. And chap. viii. 17. he saith, that to all their *abominations which they committed*, and as if they were not sufficient, *they filled the land with violence*, and devised new ways of heathenish worship also. But though they did so, and though God had done so already to part of their nation, and threatened to expel them also from their land, *yet they wearied themselves with lies*, as it is Ezek. xxiv. 12. And what they were you may guess from ver. 21, 25; the *sanctuary* was *the excellency of their strength, the joy of their glory*, and in this they trusted, and thought to be safe, though their devotions there were many of them idolatrous.

And more than this, they that were gone into captivity would not be persuaded that there was any other cause of their expulsion, but the profaning of God's worship; nor any thing more required to the pleasing him than keeping of it pure; and so they still retained their unrighteousness under the cloak of serving God. The prophet Ezekiel will bear witness

to this also, chap. xxxiii. ver. 31–33, *They came and sat before him as though they took a great deal of delight in hearing of God's word, whenas their hearts run after their covetousness.* Which words appear by the whole story to have been spoken to them of the first captivity, and that after the taking of the city the second time, ver. 21.

8. I must add further, that this people exalted themselves to such a degree of confidence in their evil ways, that they turned good fellows, (as we ordinarily speak,) and fell into drunkenness and gluttony by reason of their wealth and their security. See Isaiah xxviii. 7, 8. Yea, so haughty were they that they laughed at the prophets when they told them of those judgments that were coming upon them, and used to repeat their words with derision, ver. 10. The prophets used to say, *Thus hath the Lord commanded*, and, *Yet a little while* and such or such a thing shall be. Now they imitate this language of theirs, and say, *Manda, remanda, &c.* (as the Vulgar renders it), Command again and again if you will, let us have precept upon precept, bid us expect and look for ruin; though you say, Yet a little while, yet a little while, (or nearer to our translation, A little while for this thing here, and a little for the other there,) and then the king of Assyria shall come, we fear it not. Therefore God saith, a people of strange lips should come and speak to them, seeing they would not hear him, ver. 11, and because they would not *refresh the poor and weary* (but rather oppress them), which he told them was the way to have peace, ver. 12. And that this is the meaning of this obscure place, seems very probable from ver. 14, where he calls them *scorners*, who said, ver. 15, that *hell and death was at an agreement with them*, so that they were as sure they should not die, as if they had a lease of their lives. And though the *overflowing scourge* (spoken of ch. viii. 8) should come, yet they doubted not but they should escape; for they made a refuge to themselves. But, as the prophet tells them, it was a *refuge of lies* and hypocrisy, and God's judgments should come upon them notwithstanding their presumptuous confidence, ver. 18. And do not think that the way to heaven is so wide that you can go between God and the world thither; do not think that the bed in which he lays his spouse is so broad that it will hold many lovers. *Coangustatum enim est stratum, ita ut alter*

decidat, &c., as the vulgar Latin translates ver. 20, 'for the bed is so strait that it will not hold two, but one must fall out; the covering is so short that it will not wrap them both.' Either God, or the world and all idols, must be thrust out; they cannot lie together with us, nor cannot he endure any companion in his love. Which is just like that of our Saviour's, *No man can serve two masters, &c.;* or that of St. Paul's, *What agreement is there between Christ and Belial?* And yet notwithstanding all these admonitions, they minded nothing but to fortify Jerusalem, to repair the breaches in the walls, and to bring a moat about it; and when God called for reformation, they betook themselves to their pleasures, and were jolly and merry, as though no harm could befall them. And therefore threatens, *that this iniquity should not be purged away till they died*[d].

This profane spirit which taunted the prophets was more fit for the children of Esau than of Jacob, who as you read, Is. xxi. 11, call to the *watchman*, i. e. the prophet, and ask him, *What of the night? what of the night?* i. e. what hast thou now to say concerning the black night of affliction wherewith thou usedst to threaten us? we see no darkness, but it is a day of peace with us. To which he answers, ver. 12, True, the morning is before the night, but ere long your misery will come; therefore if you intend to amend, you had best do it presently. But the seed of Israel did not only imitate them, but far exceed them; for in process of time they arrived to such an height of impiety as to say in Josiah's days, *The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil*[e]. And after the first captivity, when their iniquity was exceeding great, and the land was full of blood, and the city of perverseness, they said, *The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not*[f]; i. e. they thought there was no Providence, and that it came but by chance that their brethren were carried captive, so that they might still fare well enough.

9. But sure when this party was removed out of their country also, and but some few of the poorer sort left behind by the Chaldeans, we shall find better dealings. And yet you must not expect it; for they thought of nothing but that they should

[d] Isa. xxii. 9—14. [e] Zeph. i. 12. [f] Ezek. ix. 9.

increase and be strong, because they were Abraham's children. And thus they reasoned with themselves [g]: that seeing their father Abraham, though but one, had the land promised to him, they being many should surely possess it, and have it for an inheritance; especially having escaped the destruction that was fallen on others. But they became guilty of the very same sins that were formerly committed, for they *shed blood*, ver. 25; i. e. committed the greatest violence: and they *stood upon their sword*, ver. 26; i. e. they hoped to protect themselves by that which was the instrument of their violence, oppression, and such like sins as they practised. I wish heartily that all the men of the world at this day would take example by those that have been before them, and not think that they shall escape destruction because they did not fall with others. God can do with them as he did with *this remnant of Judah*, whose doom read, ver. 27, 28. And above all, I desire that every one would apply these things to himself, and to this nation, which have been spoken of hypocrisy. For, as far as we are parallel to them in our manner of sinning, must we expect the like punishments to be inflicted upon us. Beware therefore, beware whosoever thou art that readest these things, lest thou cheatest thyself with an hypocritical godliness, with a great deal of heat in some religious duties, without the most exact and scrupulous justice, and the bowels of tender mercy that the gospel requires of us. This deceit is very common in the world, and more familiar than many are aware of; and yet withal so fatally destructive, that men had need to have a mark set up whereby to avoid this rock.

10. For you must not think but that the Israelites also as well as the Jews were helped forward to their ruin by this falsehood. No question but they thought their religion (as bad as it was) would preserve them, and were so confident of it, that with the very spoil of the poor they would serve their gods. So you may read, Amos ii. 6, 8, *They sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes; they were very corrupt in judgment, and they lay down upon clothes which they had in pledge by every altar, and they drank the wine of the condemned in the house of their God* [h]; i. e. they served

[g] Ezek. xxxiii. 24.

[h] See also Amos iv. 1, 4, 7.

God with those things that they had so unjustly and violently gotten, and were content to spend something upon him, so he would but wink at these unlawful and cruel ways of getting. This iniquity would in all likelihood have stared them in the face, and made them afraid, had it not been for this fine deceit (this hypocrisy which I speak of), that their serving of God and keeping up his worship, such as it was, would be accepted of by God instead of all other things wherein they might be faulty. And so when Hosea saith that the rulers who loved gifts and bribes *should be ashamed because of their sacrifices*[i] when they were carried captive, he clearly intimates that in these they trusted while they oppressed the subjects; but found themselves miserably deceived and disappointed, as all such men will be in such weak supports.

11. And how far this piece of self-cozenage prevailed in after-times, when the Pharisees were in their greatest height, I leave to those to judge who read but those passages in the Gospel, of their making long prayers, fasting twice in the week, strict observance of the Sabbath, and boasting of their skill in the law, while in the mean time they were the most gross transgressors of the law and dishonourers of God. They thanked God that they were not publicans, but were separated by many strictnesses from the herd of men; and they said, with those in Isaiah lxv. 5, *Stand by thyself, come not near, for I am holier than thou;* or as De Dieu interprets it (for there is no note of comparison in the Hebrew), *Sanctus sum tibi*, 'I am holy to thee.' Thou being a common man mayest not touch me, no more than thou mayest the holy things. And yet these seeming saints were unnatural to their parents, devoured widows' houses, absolved men from their oaths, were full of extortion, ravening, and wickedness, and derided the sermons which our Saviour made, because not sorted to their covetous humour. They would do nothing indeed but what would stand with their worldly lusts and desires, or else their own fathers (whose traditions they were so zealous of) would have taught them more goodness. For this was a saying among them, "Be as careful to keep a small precept as a great[k]:" and they give this reason for it, because the Scripture doth not express what precepts have the greatest rewards, which

[i] Hosea iv. 18, 19. [k] Cap. 2. Pirke Avoth. [p. 16.]

was therefore omitted, that with the like diligence they should keep them all. But for all this they have found a way to know this secret, and their rule is this: that "the greater the punishment is for a transgression of a command, the greater will be the reward for the observance [l]." Thence they conclude that there shall be a greater reward for keeping of the Sabbath than for keeping of the Passover, because the punishment for neglect of the former was stoning, but of the latter no more than cutting off. Who knows but from hence they might glory so much in keeping of the Sabbath and such like things, and overlook the matters of mercy and justice, because they found severe punishments for the breach of those, but, as I noted before, covetousness was not forbidden under such penalties?

12. Some such thing it was that made them esteem themselves so highly in God's favour for the observance of days and ceremonious worship, and made them think the breach of moral commands would not injure their interest in his love; for to this day they have a strange opinion of the power that a right sanctification of the Sabbath hath to restore them to their ancient enjoyments. Thus one of the doctors saith in the Talmud [m] (as Hulsius hath observed), He that observes the Sabbath according to the custom, though he should commit idolatry, yet it should be forgiven him (rendering that word, Isaiah lvi. 2, מְחַלְלוֹ, 'from profaning it,' as if it were סָחוּל לוֹ, 'it is forgiven him.') Another of them saith [n], that if they had observed the first Sabbath aright, no nation had ever prevailed over them. But it is said [o], that some of the people went to gather manna on the seventh day; and therefore it was in his opinion that Amalek came to fight with Israel [p]. Another doctor saith [q], that "if Israel could but now observe one or two Sabbaths aright, straightway they should be delivered; the Messiah would come, and he would bring them to his holy mountain again," as he gathers from Isaiah lxvi. 4, 7. So strangely are they drunken with the same cup of hypocrisy which made their fathers to reel, and stagger and fall to the ground. Of which likewise the Christians have drunk so deep, and are so

[l] V. Paulum Fag. [Ib.]

[m] [R. Jochanan apud Huls.] L. I. de Theolog. Jud. part. 2. [p. 242.]

[n] [Raf, citante R. Jehuda apud eund. ibid.]

[o] Exod. xvi. 27.

[p] Exod. xvii. 8.

[q] [R. Simeon Ben Juchai, teste R. Jochanan, ibid.]

intoxicated with the same conceit, that it was but necessary that I should make this long discourse as an antidote for the expelling of this deadly poison. And I wish that every man would not merely lick the outside of the glass, and give these things a superficial reading; but would seriously consider and suck in this truth into his very soul, that the greater zeal we have in religious performances, the more certainly shall we undo ourselves, unless there be an equal heat in all other duties that God hath commanded.

CHAP. XI.

1. *The third observable, that the prophets were the cause of the people's hypocrisy.* 2. *Proved out of Micah, Isaiah, and Hosea.* 3. *Out of many places in Jeremiah.* 4. *And of Ezekiel.* 5. *Their persecution of the true prophets arose from hence.* 6. *Therefore they were first destroyed; which is proved out of Ezekiel.* 7. *The fourth observable, that this made them so easily revolt unto idolatry when occasion served.*

1. It is time now to come to the third of those four things that I said were to be observed; which is this, that the hypocrisy and partial dealing (which was treated of in the former chapter) was cherished by the generality of the prophets and priests, who had exceedingly corrupted their ways, and loved nothing better than filthy lucre. The study of the prophets was to curry favour with the rulers, and to please the people; which made them preach smooth doctrines, soft and oily sermons that should never grate upon the conscience, lest they should lose their gain, or diminish their worldly advantages. And the priests cared for no more but that the worship of God at the temple might be maintained, that it might maintain them; that there might be a multitude of offerings and sacrifices, whereby their fees might be increased and made more plentiful. And so both the one and the other of them made the nation believe they were religious and godly enough so long as they worshipped not idols, though they did all those other villainies that I have been speaking of.

2. For the proof of this, you may read the prophet Micah, who saith, that *they made God's people to err*, and that when any thing *was put into their mouths*, then they would *cry peace;* but if nothing were put into them, *then against that man they would* at all adventures *proclaim war*[r]. He must be God's enemy that was not a friend to their belly and purse, and God could do him no harm that would be kind to them. Unto which you may add that which you read ver. 11. of the same chapter, where the priests and prophets (we are told) made a trade of their office, and sold their words, as the princes did of theirs, who sold justice. With whom agrees the prophet Isaiah, who was his contemporary, as you may see, ch. lvi. 10, 11. Where he likens them to a company of hungry dogs, in regard of their greediness, covetousness, and insatiable desire of riches and pleasure; but otherwise he saith they were like to sleepy curs that bark at nobody; or, if they do lift up their head and give a yelp or two, lay themselves down again in their sweet slumber: i. e. they were careful for their own private concernments, but they would never reprove any for their wickedness; or if they did, it was so gently as if they were afraid to displease them. And so likewise the prophet Hosea testifies, that *they eat the sin of God's people, and set their heart on their iniquity*[s], i. e. they eat the sin-offering, which was not lawful for them to meddle withal if the blood was carried into the holy place; or they eat more of the ordinary sin-offerings than they should, feeding themselves even with God's portion; they set their heart on this iniquity; or rather they were glad, not sorrowful of the people's sins, and set their heart on the people's iniquity, because they eat of their sin, and lived by the sacrifices for it. They were so far from reproving the people for their faults, that they loved their sins and rejoiced at their trespasses, because they would bring them in more large provisions by the sacrifices that were appointed for expiation of them.

3. The prophet Jeremiah also lets us know that even such persons as they who should have been the fathers of the people, were *guilty of shedding the blood of the just in the midst of Jerusalem*[t]. Their holy garments were stained with those

[r] Micah iii. 5. [s] Hosea iv. 8. [t] Lam. iv. 13.

foul sins of oppression and cruelty; and they were as visible upon them as in the rest of the nation. They cried up (it is likely) the purity of their church, the holiness of their ordinances, the devotion of their rulers, and the forwardness of the people to divine worship; and thence concluded without any further scruple that God would not destroy such a people as they were, and that the king of Babylon should not come into such an holy city. *They said even unto those that despised the Lord, You shall have peace; and unto every one that walked after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you*[u]. Every one from the least even unto the greatest was given unto covetousness; from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealt falsely; for they *healed the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace*[x]. And *were they ashamed when they had committed all these abominations? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush*, ver. 12. If you would know the reason of this confidence, it is apparent that they imagined they were holy persons, and said, *We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us*, ver. 8, which words signify that they laid the greatest weight of their hopes upon that piece of religion which hath respect to God, though they had no respect at all in their actions towards the good of one another. And the very same words you shall find in another place, chap. vi. 13, 14, 15, and that which deceived them was their sacrifices wherein they trusted, as you may gather from ver. 20, where God saith, *To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet to me.* And you may observe also that when these prophets could not avoid but they must prophesy of some evil, that so they might imitate the true prophets, and not be suspected for mere flatterers by speaking of nothing but peace and prosperity, *then they saw for them false burdens and causes of banishment*[y]. Some little mischief or other they foretold should come, if they did not amend; some small burden they laid upon them which the people did not much dread; and so their threatenings were but mock burdens, like

[u] Jer. xxiii. 17. [x] Jer. viii. 10, 11. [y] Lam. ii. 14.

the reproof of flatterers who smile while they give them; like the dogs Isaiah spoke of, who, when they seem to bite their masters, they do not fasten their teeth.

4. Unto this you may add the words of Ezekiel, chap. xxii. 25, 28, 29, where he tells us of the defection which both priests, prophets, princes and people had made from God, so that there was not so much as a man among the people *to make up the hedge and to stand in the gap* against the wrath of God, which had made a breach upon them. And particularly he saith of the prophets and priests, that they were *like ravening lions, had devoured souls, made many widows, daubed with untempered mortar, seen vanity and divined lies.* Let me entreat you to read the whole xiiith chapter, where he relates how the prophet and prophetess seduced the people, *preaching peace, when there was no peace, and strengthening the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising of him life.* The prophets they promised the people security, and built an imaginary wall of defence about them, ver. 10. The prophetesses they bid them be as quiet and at as much ease as men are when they lean their arms on a cushion; and if any man's head did but ache, they had a kerchief for it to bind it about, and make him sleep in security without any fear of danger, ver. 18. And all this unfaithfulness to souls they were guilty of for the vilest, the smallest gain imaginable; *for an handful of barley, or a bit of bread*, they would pollute God's name, and slay poor souls that depended on them, ver. 19.

5. And more than this, they persecuted the true prophets who dealt sincerely with the people, and told them the great danger that was impending over them. One place in the prophet Jeremiah may serve instead of all for the attesting of this charge against them, which is chap. xxvi., where they accuse him to the princes for nothing else but because he prophesied destruction to them, ver. 8, 9.

Some of the elders indeed were affected with his prophecy, and brought for his justification in what he said the example of Micah, who had spoken the same words in the time of Hezekiah, and yet that king did not put him to death, but feared the Lord, and laboured for a reformation, ver. 18, 19.

But then the people have their story to oppose to this, (in

ver. 20, which seems to be their words,) how that Urijah had lately taken the same boldness to prophesy in the present king's reign against their city, but the king would not endure it; but though he fled into Egypt, yet he sent after him and brought him home, and slew him with the sword in a disgraceful manner. And it should seem that, had not Ahikam resolutely stood his friend, this last story had prevailed against Jeremiah, ver. 24. And in the next chapter we read, that some of them undertook to prophesy that shortly the vessels of the Lord's house should be brought again from Babylon that had been lately carried thither. And though Jeremiah assured them of the vanity of this assertion, yet in the next after that, chap. xxviii., there arose a prophet, who, to please the people, assigns the punctual time when it should be done; and out of a great conceit, sure, that they were God's beloved people, whatsoever did befall them, there arose prophets in Babylon among them of the first captivity, who foretold the same things with those at Jerusalem, as you may see chap. xxix. Insomuch that it became a proverb among those that were left still there, that another captivity would never come, whatsoever the prophets said[z]. And they plainly intimate[a], that they had as good prophets as he, and should always have, notwithstanding he prophesied their destruction; and therefore, seeing they could well spare him, they devised how to despatch him out of the way, that he might not trouble them.

6. But these prophets, who made the people believe the captivity should never come, did themselves first feel the burden of it before any other persons. The wall of defence, that bulwark of security that they built for them in their sermons, being laid together and daubed with untempered mortar, it fell down upon them that daubed it, so that it was said, *This wall is no more, neither they that daubed it*[b]. And these two things are remarkable in another vision of his[c], where he sees the slayers sent forth to destroy all those in the city that did not sadly bewail the sins of it. First, that the priests were first punished; for he bids him *begin at the sanctuary*, and it is said they slew the elders which were

[z] Ezek. vii. 22, 23, &c.
[a] Jer. xviii. 18.
[b] Ezek. xiii. 15, 16.
[c] Chap. ix.

there, and so went forth and slew in the city[d]. Secondly, that they were all slain and destroyed, none of them being spared; for though they are bidden to mark some in the city, verse 4, yet you read of none to be marked in the sanctuary. And therefore Ezekiel complains as if he was left alone[e], i. e. in vision he was present at this slaughter made among the ministers in the sanctuary, and he could see no priest remaining there but himself. So dangerous a thing it is to have a form of godliness without the power of it actuating the whole soul, that such persons run themselves into destruction by their false hopes and dreams of God's favour, and bring likewise all their credulous admirers, and those that hang upon their lips, into an unexpected ruin with them. I shall not presume so far as to tell you what examples we have of this in our age of the world; but pass to the fourth thing observable, which shall be quickly despatched, because I have stayed so long upon the two former.

7. From hence you may perceive the reason why they did so easily upon any occasion revolt from God, and fall to idolatry again. They were but half reformed, and retained the very root of idolatry in their hearts; and therefore, rather than suffer any thing from the displeasure of a new king, they would set up the false worship again, and become of his religion. For so you may see that after Hezekiah's time, who had made a great change among them, Manasseh and the people with him returned to their idols; and after Josiah, it is the complaint of Jeremiah, that they went a whoring from God. Now what reason can be assigned for this, but that their hearts were rotten, and though they prided themselves in a religion, yet it was that which they did not understand, or love upon any other account but as it did maintain them in their present covetousness and violence? Whence it came to pass that the same covetous affections made them change their religion when there was no other way to serve them. And as their reformation in religion was sometimes a cloak for their covetousness, so in process of time their covetousness made them think any religion to be good enough, and to debauch the worship of God without any alteration of their confidence.

[d] Ezek. ix. 6, 7. [e] Ver. 8.

And this run them also upon another mischief, which was, that when they had forgotten God, and principles of conscience, though they were confident, yet it was in the power and strength of men rather than in God, who used to defend them marvellously. *Is Israel a servant?* (saith Jeremy[f],) *is he an home-born slave?* i. e. doth not God care how he uses him, or what misery he exposes him unto, as men do with their slaves that they have full possession of? Is he not God's son, yea, his first-born? *but how then comes it to pass that he is spoiled?* The prophet answers that indeed both Assyria and Egypt had devoured him[g], but it was his own fault, who forsook his God, and sought to those for help who rather did him harm[h]. And so it will be with every one (as it was with him[i]) who betakes himself to evil courses to defend what he hath as unjustly gotten: *His own wickedness shall correct him, and his backslidings shall reprove him; he shall know that it is an evil thing and a bitter that he hath forsaken the Lord, and that his fear is not in him.*

CHAP. XII.

1. *The second general truth discoursed of, that after their return from Babylon they had not left these sins.* 2. *God had taken care to prevent their falling into them, but Zachary tells us to how small effect.* 3. *And so doth Haggai.* 4. *And Malachi, in whose prophecy a difficult place is explained, Mal. ii.* 13, 14, 15. 5. *Zachary tells us what would be in after-times.* 6. *Which was too fully verified in their base usage of the Lord of life.* 7. *Christians not free from the same sins to this day.*

And now, leaving these observations to every man's private consideration, I shall pass to the second general truth which I promised to illustrate, and that is this; that these were the sins which the prophets note this people to have been guilty of after they were returned out of their captivity, and when an amendment might justly have been expected. Ezekiel, who

[f] Jer. ii. 14. [g] Ver. 15, 16. [h] Ver. 17, 18. [i] Ver. 19.

had seen the glory of the Lord depart from the temple, and so his protection from the nation, (as you read before, ch. ix.,) doth prophesy likewise of its return again, and in a vision he beheld it coming in at that gate where it went out, and seating itself in the new house of God, which he describes Ezek. xliii. 3, 4, 5. Justice and gratitude would make us now think that they would never offend God in such manner as their fathers had done; especially after they had felt so long darkness, by the departure of the Divine glory from their land. But yet, as if these sins had been transfused into them with their parents' seed, they would not cross the old proverb, Like father, like son, treading into their steps, and leaving the like example to their posterity. Very devout they were (for aught that we can read) in their religious worship; no complaints are brought in against them for not keeping the Sabbath, not praying, fasting, and offering sacrifice. But they knew themselves so punctual in these things, that they slided into the same deceit wherein their fathers were caught and perished. They imagined that those things were all the reverence that was to be performed to the Divine glory which dwelt among them, and that it would not be offended with their unjust and unmerciful dealings. For in the very beginning of this prophecy of Zachary (where we begun this discourse) he cries out, chap. i. 3, 4, &c. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn you, turn you unto me; be not ye as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets cried the very same words;* who, though they would not hearken then, yet afterwards were forced to acknowledge, when God's words took hold of them, that they were punished according to their doings. And this was when the captivity was expired that he made this proclamation unto them; whereby we may judge that they were not converted when God had turned their captivity.

2. And indeed God foresaw what would be their practice, and wherein they would bestow their greatest ceremony; and therefore, many years before this deliverance, he labours to secure the observance of these neglected duties, when it should be vouchsafed to them. For before he warns them a word about their sacrifices by the prophet Ezekiel, he gives the princes a great charge about matters of justice, equity and kind dealing, as you may read Ezek. xlv. 8–11, &c. And then there immediately follows

a large direction about their offerings and feasts that they should observe, in the latter end of that chapter, and part of the next. But as he begun, so he concludes that discourse, with a business that concerns justice; *The prince shall not take the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession*[k], *&c.* And yet we cannot but take notice that they were horribly faulty in these things, though the laws of sacrifice which they carefully kept were environed with cautions about them. For Zachary plainly tells us that robbery and perjury (two most gross sins) did still reign among them, and, to make them more provoking, they said notwithstanding that they were innocent. So Junius reads those words, Zech. v. 3, *This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth:* 'for every one that steals of this people saith, as it, (i. e. as the rest of the earth,) I am innocent: and whosoever sweareth of this people saith, as it, that he is innocent;' i. e. they were no more sensible of these sins than many heathen people who knew but little of God, and so might more easily forget what was only taught them by themselves. But in our translation indeed it is a threatening, and thus it may be expounded (as De Dieu hath noted) most agreeable to the Hebrew text, *He that steals is cut off on this side* (viz. of the flying roll) *according to it*, (i. e. according to the curse,) *and he that swears is cut off on the other side according to it.* The roll or book that he speaks of, ver. 2, which contained a curse in it, threatened upon all Judea, (which was as the roll, longer than broad,) was to fly abroad and spread itself upon all the guilty persons. Now one side of the book (saith he) contains a curse against all thieves, which shall certainly light upon them, and the other side of it against all false swearers, which shall also come upon them according as is threatened. And therefore he goes on further to denounce God's judgments upon such persons, ver. 4, and speaking of the woman *that sat in the midst of the ephah*, ver. 7, (by whom was shadowed the people of the land, whose iniquities should be borne withal but to a certain measure,) he saith, ver. 8, *This is* הָרִשְׁעָה, *wickedness*, i. e. iniquity itself, the mother of all deceits, thefts, and perjuries: and for this he threatens again unto them another

[k] Ezek. xlvi. 18.

expulsion and dispersion into another Babylon, as you may see in the following part of the chapter. And afterward God having most plainly told them how the case stood with their fathers, and how angry he had been with them[l], he saith, that *now he was returned to Zion, and would dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and it should be a city of truth*, &c.[m] And he tells them what great things he would do for them, and that as they had been a curse, so now they should be a blessing[n]. But then he adds that these are the things they must do; *Speak ye every one the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of peace and truth in your gates: and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord*[o].

3. And if we look back to Haggai, who prophesied but two years before these words in the eighth of Zachary were spoken, (one being in the second, the other in the fourth year of Darius,) he will tell us no better news of this people. For he saith[p], that every thing that the people did take in hand was as unclean and polluted as that which was touched by one defiled with a dead body, and that though they were an holy people to him, yet that did not make the things that they meddled withal holy. Now if we compare this passage with those that were before gathered out of Zachary, we shall easily discern, I think, what the matter was that made God so offended with their doings. At first they let the temple of the Lord lie waste, and builded their own houses after their return from captivity before they built it, though God had given them a command to go about it. But out of this neglect they were awakened by these two prophets, and by many judgments and sore afflictions mentioned Hag. ii. 15, 16, 17. and Zach. viii. 9, 10. And then they thought all was well, because they obeyed God's voice in this thing, and because he promised *from that day forward to bless them*[q]. So the temple were but carried on to perfection, they thought no great care was due to other things; and so continued in a world of wicked-

[l] Zech. viii. 2. [m] Ver. 3. [n] Ver. 4, 5, &c., and ver. 13.
[o] Ver. 16, 17. [p] Hag. ii. 11–14. [q] ii. 19.

ness, making their zeal for temple-work eat up all their love to justice and mercy.

4. If we should trace their footsteps further, we should soon find that when the temple was completed and finished, they were but little better. For Malachy, who concludes their story in the Old Testament, (and is called by them חוֹתָם הַנְּבִיאִים, 'the seal of the prophets,' because he was the last, and shuts up all,) complaining of the iniquity both of priest and people, sets down these sins as famous among the rest: *false swearing, oppression of the hireling in his wages, of the widow and fatherless; and turning aside the stranger from his right*[r]: all which they did without any fear of what would follow. And particularly of the priests, he tells us that *they were partial in the law*[s], i. e. they did not judge according to the merit of the cause, but according to their love of the person. And of the princes, we are told by Nehemiah, how heavily they oppressed the people, by exacting usury of them, chap. 5. By which, together with the dearth, they became so poor, that it was the cause (I believe) of their detaining the tithes from the Levites[t], and that they were tempted to rob God himself as the princes robbed them[u]. To which add the great violence that they all offered to their wives, either putting of them quite away, (as some understand the place,) or else taking others to them, (which was worse for their poor wives,) and these *the daughters of a strange god*[x]. This, you know, they had begun to do presently after their return out of captivity, and upon the serious admonition of Ezra repented of it; but it should seem that they fell into the same sin again in after-times, and that so universally, and so much to the injury of their wives, that they *caused the altar of the Lord to be covered with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regarded not their offerings any more*, &c.[y]; i. e. their wives made such grievous complaints to the Lord of the violence that was offered them, (so it is called, ver. 16,) that it caused him to despise all their gifts that they brought him; he looked more at the others' tears than at all their sacrifices. And yet they have the front to come and ask God wherefore he would not receive them[z]. To which he answers,

[r] Mal. iii. 5. [s] ii. 9. [t] Neh. xiii. 10. [u] Mal. iii. 8.
[x] ii. 11. [y] Ver. 13. [z] Ver. 14.

that he must deal righteously, though they would not; and he could not but take notice how treacherously they had dealt with their wives, who, as they had been their companions, merited greater kindness from them; and as they were taken by covenant and contract, they were in justice obliged to have dealt better with them. And he proves that it must needs be a great offence, because it was so contrary to God's institution in marriage; for *did not he make one, and yet he had the residue of the Spirit?* &c.[a]; i. e. according as we translate it, Did not he make one wife only for Adam, whereas he having more of the same spirit that he breathed into her, could have made many? &c. Or if we render it with others: Did not he who is one make it? (i. e. the covenant of marriage,) and he hath abundance of the same spirit still to breathe into our seed. And wherefore did that one make that order, that a man should cleave to his wife, but that he might have a godly seed? And therefore take heed what you do in putting away your wives, and taking others; for hereby you offend him that breathes the *spirit of life* into us. Or if we take it as others interpret it, their wickedness is still argued to be the greater, because they boasted that they were the *children of Abraham.* Now *did that one* (i. e. the first of your family) *do so, of whose spirit we are the residue? and what did that one? he sought a godly seed;* he put not away Sarah, though she was barren, (which to you would seem a just cause,) nor matched with an idolater, that he might have issue. Or if we receive that rendering of the words which the learned De Dieu[b] prefers above all the rest, it argues them of great inhumanity, and that they had not common good nature in them, which makes the sin still greater. No one would do thus that had but any relics of the Spirit of God in him, and therefore much less they that seek a godly seed, as you pretend to do. You see that he might well call this *covering violence with his garment,* ver. 16, because it was such a wrong to those that by the laws of God and nature deserved better at their hands. *To spread one's garment,* or one's skirts over a woman, is a phrase in holy writ for to marry her[c]. By taking therefore of a strange woman into their society, which was engaged before to another, they

[a] Mal. ii. 15. [b] [Animadvers. in Vet. Test. p. 740.] [c] Ruth iii. 9; Ezek. xvi. 8.

did as it were marry to violence, and contract a relation with injustice. Or, as the forenamed author thinks it should be translated, *violence covered their garments;* i. e. whenas they ought still to have cast their garments of love and protection over their wives, violence and wrong did cover those garments; their marriage was an act of injustice, and their skirts, which they spread over strangers, were all over stained with cruelty, hard-heartedness, and oppression.

5. And Zachary tells us, by way of prophecy, what should be in after-times toward the end of this nation, and what manner of rulers should be over the people. He compares their shepherds, i. e. governors, (as I have shown before,) unto young lions, who do not use to protect but to devour the sheep[d]. And he calls the people *the flock of slaughter*[e], (whom he is bid to instruct,) either because they were to be destroyed by the armies of their enemies, or because they were a prey unto their governors: according as it follows, *Their possessors slay them, and they hold themselves not guilty*[f]. Yea, to such a confidence were they arrived in these sins, that they bless God for the riches which they had got in this sort. They had some devotion, you see, left, though no honesty nor goodness. God is entitled to all wicked possessions and acquisitions, that he may make them good, and defend them against all the clamours of men, and the suits of their own conscience. And, it seems, the people were very bad also, for ver. 6, he threatens them that he would have no more pity on them than their rulers had, but let them destroy one another by seditions, and at last deliver them all into the hands of the king that oppressed them; who should be so far from taking any pastoral care of them, that he should only slay and devour them, as you may read ver. 16.

6. And some understand by that king the Roman Cæsar, to whom they made themselves a prey by such sins as those I have been treating of. That long captivity, which endures to this day, had its way prepared by their avarice and cruelty, as those acquaint us upon whom the spirit of prophecy was again poured forth. For our Lord coming and reproving the chief of that generation when he lived for devouring widows' houses,

[d] Zech. xi. 3. [e] Ver. 4. [f] Ver. 5.

for extortion, rapine, and blood; for covetousness and oppression, for being without natural affection, and the like sins; while they made long prayers, and pretended a great deal of sanctity and religion; he declaring also that faith, judgment, mercy, and the love of God, were more to be regarded than their strict observation of days, and the multitude of sacrifices; they, out of a great zeal for their religion, which they thought he did not speak honourably enough concerning, most shamefully put him to death. I believe they took themselves to be very religious persons, and were zealous in what they did; only their zeal was not equally dispensed, nor conveyed alike through the whole body of duties that God commanded. Their heat was like the flushing in men's faces, or the burning in their hands, which we do not take to be an argument of a good temper, but rather a sign that there are obstructions (as the ordinary language calls them) in the body, so that there is not a free motion of the vital blood in all the parts. I mean, they spent so much zeal in a few things, that they left no warmth of affection for other most necessary duties. In those things their heart was stayed and stopt, which made them of an extraordinary high colour, and to have the repute in the world of very great saints and most virtuous persons. Yea, they themselves gazed so much upon this flame, that they took no notice how cold they were in matters of common honesty, but they committed all iniquity, in a comfortable belief that they were good men, and most beloved of God. Their great zeal for the Sabbath, and such-like matters, made them take themselves for pious and devout persons: but the partiality and particularity of it (whereby it remained there confined) made them really to be such as our Saviour calls *hypocrites;* which appellation they took in such disdain, that they conspired his death, who would not let such as they pass for godly men.

7. And are Christians to this day more reformed, who have inherited their promises? I wish I could say that we are as free from covetousness, rapine, and unmercifulness, as the Pharisees were from Sabbath-breaking and idolatry. R. D. Kimchi, upon Hos. ii. 19, 20, hath confessed a great deal of that truth which I have endeavoured to illustrate[g]; but I can only wish

[g] [Pp. 40, 1.—Hoseas propheta Ebraice et Chaldaice, cum commentariis Solomonis Jarchi, Aben Ezræ, et Davidis Kimchi, 4to. Lugd. Bat. 1621.]

that the latter part of his gloss were found as true as the former part hath proved. He saith those words cannot have a complete sense till the time of the Messiah, and that God uses the word *betroth* three times because of the three captivities; after which God doth as it were marry them to himself, but in the days of the Messiah after a more excellent manner than in former times. For when they came out of Egypt, he did not betroth them לְעוֹלָם *for ever*, as he saith he will[h]. And when they came out of Babylon he did not *betroth them in righteousness, judgment,* and *mercy,* as he saith he would[i], for we read[k], that they took strange wives, and they oppressed their brethren likewise, &c. Therefore in the days of the Messiah (which they still expect after this third captivity) all this shall be done, when he will *betroth* his people *in faithfulness*[l]. We have seen the truth of what he saith concerning the time of their coming out of Babylon, and that they did not love *righteousness, judgment,* and *mercy;* we also see the days of the Messiah, and God hath married us Gentiles to himself. O that we could see the Christian world full of justice and charity! But alas! Christians deal falsely with God in his covenant, and they are not thus espoused to him. They would have God and mammon at the same time in marriage together: and they grieve the Spirit of God, as the Jews did their lawful wives, by taking co-partners with it into their love. I wish that this truth did not shine as clear without any proof, as it doth appear by the many proofs I have alleged, that this was the state of Israel. And I need not borrow more light from any other scriptures to make it plainer than it is, that these have been very often the wasting and destroying sins; because commonly not observed in the midst of a blaze of religious duties, which dazzle men's eyes, and make these sins seem either none at all, or very little and contemptible.

[h] Hos. ii. 19. [i] Ibid. [k] Ezra ix. 2. [l] Hos. ii. 20.

CHAP. XIII.

1. *The third general propounded, that these sins are of a most destructive nature to nations.* 2. *Proved from the captivity of Israel.* 3. *And from the first captivity of Judah.* 4. *The injustice of rulers very fatal to them, and why.* 5. *The second captivity of Judah imputed to the same cause.* 6. *Tyre split on the same rock.* 7. *Nineveh likewise and Babylon.* 8. *With many other nations mentioned in the first and second chapters of Amos.* 9. *And in many other places.* 10. *This confirmed from an observation among the wise men of the Hebrews.* 11. *And from the history of the last Greek empire; where* 12. *Causes are given of its destruction by the Turks.*

1. And this leads me to the third thing that I am to make proof of, viz. that these are sins which pull down ruin and destruction upon a nation, and are oft the chiefest cause of it. The poet never spoke a truer word then when he said, Δίκας τεῖχος ὕψιον[m], (i. e. as the scholiast well notes, ἀσφαλὲς ἰσχυρὸν,) 'justice is a high wall;' there is no such tall and impregnable bulwark, such a safe defence to a nation, as to deal uprightly and honestly one with another, and with all their neighbours. And then I am sure a nation is like to be laid waste, when there is a breach made in this wall for oppression, violence, and wrong to enter in. I have already noted so many passages out of the prophets that make these sins the cause of their desolation, and being carried captive out of their land, that I may presume the reader is sufficiently convinced of it: but that I may leave no room for doubting, and give more abundant satisfaction in this particular, I shall distinctly by these steps confirm him in that belief.

2. And, first, let it be observed, that the captivity of Israel, or the ten tribes, is in great part charged upon the account of these sins. This will be evident to him that can take the pains to consult these places in the prophet Amos, whose vision was concerning that people, chap. ii. 6, 7, 8, and chap. iii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, in which place he speaks as if he destroyed them for these sins, but would reckon with them also for their idolatrous

[m] Pindar. [Fragm. in Plat. de Rep. ii. p. 365 b; Max. Tyr. Orat. xviii. tom. i. p. 338; Cic. ad Attic. xiii. 38. But the correct reading is δίκᾳ τεῖχος ὕψιον.]

worship at the same time. Read also chap. iv. 1, 2, 3, chap. v. 7, 10, 11, 12, 16, and chap. viii. from the fourth verse to the end of the tenth; to which add chap. vi. 3, 7, and Hosea iv. 1, 2, 3.

3. Let it be observed, in the second place, that the captivity of Judah, both first and last, is most manifestly ascribed to the same sins, which even in their reformations they spared from being destroyed. For the causes of their first captivity I must again put the reader to the pains of considering these places in the prophets, which are too large to transcribe; Mic. ii. 1, 2, 3; iii. 12: Isa. x. 1, 2, 3; xxx. 12, 13, 14; and lvii. 17; where God saith, that *for the iniquity of his covetousness he was wroth,* &c. So unjust indeed they were, that they hated all good men, and cared not whether there was one of them left in the world, ver. 1. But especially consider Isa. xxix. 2, which hath been explained before (chap. vi.) to signify that the people of Jerusalem should be slaughtered, just as their sacrifices, wherein they trusted for salvation, were at the altar. Now if you look into ver. 21, you will see what their sins were; unjust dealing, and laying hold of every occasion to ruin their neighbour, and contriving ways to entrap him. And it is remarkable, that such as their sin was, such was their punishment. As they were unsatiable in their covetousness and thirst after wealth, so were their enemies unsatiable in their appetite to devour them. For he saith, ver. 7, 8, that their enemies shall be as an hungry man that thinks his belly is full in a dream, but awakes and finds his stomach to be sharp set by reason of emptiness. They had a kind of dog-like appetite; all their cruelties, wherewith one would have thought their anger would have been satisfied, being but like a dream in comparison of those that were behind. As their thirst of unjust gain still used to increase, and the more they had, the more they desired to have; so was it with their enemies' thirst after their blood; one draught, that might be thought enough to quench it, was but a preparation for a larger, and made them more greedy of it. Read likewise Jer. v. 25—29, and vii. 28, 29, where, after he had said, *Truth is perished, and cut off from their mouth,* it follows, *Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away,* &c.; i. e. he proclaims a captivity which should be a cause of grievous mourning and lamentation

to them. And so Jer. xxi. 12, 13, he calls for speedy execution of judgment, or else his anger should break forth like fire against them; and though mount Sion was strong as a rock, yet they must not think that it should be able to defend them without justice, which (as I said) is a rampart stronger than a wall of rocks and mountains.

4. And let me here, before I proceed further, take notice how angry God was with the injustice of their kings and governors, and destroyed them for it. Ezekiel compares their two kings Jehoiakim and Jehoiakin to two young lions, who did devour and tear the people in pieces[n]; and therefore he takes up a lamentation over them[o], and says that they were destroyed just as they used to do wild beasts which they took in pits made for that purpose. The one of them was taken by the king of Egypt[p], and the other by the king of Babylon[q], that they might no more catch any prey upon the mountains of Israel. And hereby the strength and power of that nation was much impaired, there being no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule, ver. 14, as shall further appear in the next observation. It is such a monstrous thing for those who are the conservators of right and justice to transgress it, that God cannot but punish such misdemeanours, he being the supreme moderator of all, who will see that right take place. They are God's here below, and should act his part among men, which if they do not, it belongs properly to him to chastise them, and turn them out of their office. And he will do it, because they commit sins so contrary to the end of their institution, and so disagreeing to the nature and being of the office they bear. So strange and monstrous a thing it is for rulers to violate justice, that the son of Sirach saith[r], *it is like the lust of an eunuch to deflower a virgin*, i. e. not only a treacherous but a most unnatural thing. Justice is ordinarily compared by all authors to a virgin; and therefore (1) it must be kept pure, chaste, and uncorrupted; and (2) for that end it is committed to the charge of judges and other officers, as virgins in the eastern countries used to be entrusted to eunuchs who waited upon them; but then (3) these judges and rulers must be as far from corrupting justice, as an eunuch is from vitiating of a virgin;

[n] Ezek. xix. 3, 6. [o] Ver. 1. [p] Ver. 4. [q] Ver. 9. [r] Ecclus. xx. 4.

or (4) if they do *constuprare justitiam,* (as Tertullian's phrase is,) 'commit a rape upon right and justice,' it cannot but be looked upon as a strange act of violence. For as God and nature forbid such a force by an eunuch, so do God and man forbid it in a king or a judge. And (5) if they prove guilty of such an unnatural sin, they shall endure the punishment that such wretched persons were condemned unto; God will not spare them above all other men. To this purpose Delrio on that place notes out of Jansenius and others[s].

5. And now for the second captivity of Judah, we shall soon see to what cause it was to be imputed. Ezekiel tells us in the xviith chapter of his prophecy, that Nebuchadnezzar, like a great eagle, had carried away to his own country the highest branch of the cedar in Lebanon, i. e. Jeconiah the king of Judah, who was first carried captive by him, ver. 3. And this eagle only left a little seed, which was Zedekiah, whose kingdom could not grow any stronger or higher than a vine, because over-topped and oppressed by the Chaldeans, who cast a dark and cold shadow upon it, vers. 5, 6. Now Zedekiah took an oath to be true to the king of Babylon, who had planted him in the kingdom, as you may see vers. 13, 14. But he hoping to rise to a greater strength and tallness than the stature of a vine, and beholding another eagle (which was the king of Egypt) under whose protection he imagined that he might spread and dilate himself; we read, vers. 7, 8, 15, that this vine inclined her branches, and shot her roots toward him, that he might water it and make it grow great, by helping it from the oppression of the Chaldeans. But for this falseness and breach of covenant God was no less angry than Nebuchadnezzar, and threatens to pull it up by the roots, and make every leaf of it wither, ver. 9, i. e. utterly destroy the kingdom of Judah, and to leave none of them to bear rule in the land, as you may read from the 15th to the end of the 21st verse, where you may see the sin that he denounces this judgment upon is breach of promise, and much more violation of his oath and covenant, which he took so heinously that it is repeated five times as the cause of their ruin, vers. 15, 16, 18, 19, 20. And God calls it not only Nebuchadnezzar's oath, ver. 16, but his own oath

[s] [Adag. sacr. Vet. Test. p. 530.]

which was despised, ver. 19. And it is again repeated, Ezekiel xxi. 23, as a thing that God could not forget, but for which he brought the king of Babylon against them. And if you compare Hosea x. 4, with 2 Kings xvii. 4, you will find that this piece of unjustice in swearing falsely and breaking covenants was a sin that brought Israel also to ruin. There is but one place more that I shall note, which concerns this captivity of Judah, and it is Jer. xxxiv., where the prophet calls upon them to *let the bondmen of the Hebrew nation go free according to the law in that behalf.* And they promised by a solemn covenant that they would yield obedience; but afterward became doubly guilty, by breaking their promise, and keeping their brethren still in slavery. Now see what God threatens because of this oppression and transgression of their covenant[t]. No less than a total extirpation of them out of their land, if not out of the land of the living, by the sword, pestilence and famine. And to this I am apt to think that passage relates which we meet withal in the very beginning of Jeremy's Lamentations, *Judah is gone into captivity, because of affliction, and because of great servitude*[u].

6. And now if any one hath a list to look into the state of other nations mentioned in the Scripture story besides these, he will find the destruction of them all attributed to the fatal influence that these sins had upon them. Tyre, a neighbour country, called the total *sum of all beauty*[x], *that walked in the midst of the stones of fire*[y]: i. e. of precious stones and jewels that sparkled on every side of her; and that was like an *angel* for glory and bravery, and as a *sanctuary* for strength and safety[z]; this famous and perfect city corrupted herself by violence, covetousness, deceit in her traffic, which she anciently had abhorred, and then God brought a fire to devour her[a]. She flourished, you there read, after a wonderful manner till iniquity was found in her, and then (as it is chap. xxvi. 14.) she became *like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon.* And thus she lay for seventy years, as Jerusalem did, according as Isaiah tells us[b]; by whom you

[t] Jer. xxxiv. 17, 18, 19, 20, &c.
[u] Lam. i. 3.
[x] Ezek. xxviii. 12. [y] Ver. 14.
[z] Vers. 16, 18.
[a] Vers. 15, 16, 18, 19.
[b] Isa. xxiii. 17.

must interpret those words in Ezekiel, that *she should be built no more.*

7. And lest you should think that these things concerned only Judah and some of her next door neighbours, who might have some report of their laws, but did not bode so sadly to other more remote nations where these sins are found; take further into your consideration what God says of Nineveh, which city had been a great hammer or mall in the times of the Assyrian kings unto Judea and other countries. And you find that these sins beat her to dust, and slew those lion-like kings, though they filled their holes with prey and their dens with rapine, and thought to bring up their whelps, i. e. their sons, to the same trade of devouring[c]. God sent one of those lions (viz. Sennacherib) against the hypocritical nation that I have been describing, and gave him charge to *take the spoil and the prey of it*[d]. But he thought of nothing but *destroying and cutting off nations not a few*[e]; and therefore God threatens to destroy him utterly, and to take off his burden and yoke from his people's neck[f]. This he did by the hand of the Chaldeans, who broke the Assyrian empire in pieces, but yet succeeded them in cruelty and ravening, covetousness and unmercifulness, taking all for fish that came to their net, according as the kings of Nineveh did[g]: and therefore they drunk of the same cup of his indignation, as you may read, Isaiah xiii. 19, 20, &c. and Isaiah xiv. 3, 4, 5, 6, where he notes the *hard bondage* wherewith he made the conquered to serve and their *oppression*, and *ruling the nations in anger*, as causes of their destruction. To which may be added that most evident place, Isaiah xlvii. 56, where he saith plainly that cruelty and oppression toward those whom she had overcome brought the *lady* and mistress of the world to sit down in the dust in perpetual *silence* and *darkness.* I will refer you but to one place more which treats most largely of the Chaldeans' ruin, and that is Habakkuk ii. 5—18, which whosoever reads must cast his eyes very carelessly upon it, who doth not see that unsatiable covetousness, cruelty, bloodiness, violence, spoiling, and such like sins, are made to have a greater hand than their

[c] Nahum ii. 11, 12, 13; iii. 1, 2, &c. [d] Isa. x. 5, 6. [e] Ver. 7, &c.
[f] Vers. 26, 27. [g] Hab. i. 15.

idols in reaching *the cup of the Lord's right hand unto them,* and making them so *drunken* and full gorged, that *shameful spewing was upon all their glory.* And take notice also that one reason why this mischief was not prevented, and this destruction came upon them while they thought not of it, was the same with that which we met withal in the case of Judah, viz. the base flattering humour of their soothsayers, the men-pleasing prophecies of such diviners and watchmen as they had, (though pitiful ones they were,) who had told them lies, just as the watchmen of God's people had done to them: which the latter part of that Isaiah xlvii. doth give us reason to take for a truth.

8. How long should I make this discourse if I should multiply more particulars from Damascus, Gaza, Edom, Ammon, and all the rest mentioned together with Israel in the first and second chapters of Amos, who were all threatened for their oppression and cruelty to be punished without any mercy? He saith there that for three, yea for four transgressions, i. e. for a great many he would reckon with them, but he instances only in this one of cruelty, as if this was the principal, and that which excelled all the rest in provocation. And I will only desire you to consider as you read those chapters, whether you can refuse to assent to this as a true observation, that one great destroying (if not the chiefest) sin of all those nations, was this piece of unmercifulness, their cruel dealing with those whom they had conquered, and got into their power. I am sure that Edom's four transgressions are so near of kin to this, that we can scarce make them any more than four degrees of this one sin, viz. want of kindness, compassion and mercy to those whom it was natural for him to pity, especially when he had the better of them. *He did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever*[h].

9. And I think there is another whole chapter, which renders no other cause of the perishing of those Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines also, but this, that they either rejoiced and clapped their hands at the ruin of their neighbour Judah, or else with an implacable and irreconcilable hatred

[h] Amos i. 11.

prosecuted their victories over them, intending their total deletion and final destruction[i]. If any cause is to be added, it must be one of the same nature, which was, that they made use of the victories of others to the revenging themselves, and they killed those that fled for refuge to them[k]. For so the Edomites did, as you may see, Obad. 14. and Jer. xlix. 2, where the prophet tells us that they seized on their land, and took themselves to be the heirs of Judah, whom they looked on as their younger brethren. And concerning both their cruelty and their covetousness in seizing on their land, you may see more in Ezekiel xxxv. 5, 10, for which they are there sorely threatened, vers. 11, 12. But, as I said, I will not make a volume by prolonging this discourse till a particular narrative be given you of all these things. Nor will I any more than suggest to your meditation (1) how that Ammon is again threatened for *insulting upon the neck of the slain*, i. e. of a fallen and feeble enemy[l]. (2) Pharaoh for deceiving and cozening the expectation of Israel who leaned upon his promise[m]. And (3) the Israelites themselves, for *slaying their brethren* of Judah *with rage that reached up to heaven*, and intending without any pity to make them their bondmen[n]. And (4) how in general it is denounced, that *the robbery of the wicked shall destroy them, because they refuse to do judgment*[o], *&c.* And (5) how that God hath styled himself *the avenger of the poor and needy*, and he that will *plead the cause of those that have no helper;* that are crushed by the mighty, neither having power to right themselves, nor the favour of others to do them right. And (6) that these are such unnatural sins, and so contrary to all the dealings of God with men, (who is merciful, kind, and compassionate, as well as just and righteous,) that he will not let them go unpunished; especially in the rulers whose office it is to see right, equity, and mercy take place among men. And (7) that honest heathens note it as an infamous thing to use captives either cruelly or ignominiously; or to do unjustly and hardly with those who are brought under our power, especially if there be any nearness of one to the other; as he that will may see by many instances in Ælian's *Var. Hist.* l. vi.

[i] Ezek. xxv. [k] Joel iii. 19. [l] Ezek. xxi. 29. [m] xxix. 6, 7.
[n] 2 Chron. xxviii. 9, 10. [o] Prov. xxi. 7, 15.

cap. 1, where he condemns the Lacedemonians and Athenians, &c. for that when they had a gale of prosperity breathing on them *σωφρόνως οὐκ ἤνεγκαν*, they did not bear it moderately, and use it with a humble mind, but were *ὑβρισταὶ*, and behaved themselves in an injurious contumelious manner towards those who were shipwrecked in the storm.

10. That God is the avenger of all such, the Jews, you have seen, are a notable example, though they stood in a nearer relation to him than the rest of the world. And by often woful experience, it seems, some of them grew so sensible of it, that there is a saying upon record of some wise men among them to this sense: 'When God's ears are shut against all men's prayers, he will hear the cry of the poor, needy, and oppressed.' *Quando vastata fuit domus sanctuarii, omnes portæ clausæ fuerunt* חוצ משער אונ אה), *excepta porta oppressionis:* i. e. 'when the temple was destroyed, there was no gate open for the prayers and petitions of any to enter, but only the gate for the petitions of the oppressed,' which, they say, is never shut. This they prove (as Buxtorf hath noted[p]) out of Amos vii. 7, which they render thus; 'And he showed me, and behold the Lord stood על חוסת אנך, upon the wall of defraudation or oppression, (i. e. I suppose of Samaria or Jerusalem, cities full of violence,) and in his hand were defraudations,' i. e. prayers against defrauders, petitions of those who complained of oppression and unjust dealing, of which we have heard they were extremely guilty. And then God saith, ver. 8, that though he had spared them twice upon the petition of Amos, (ver. 3, 6,) yet now that these petitions of the poor came to him, he *would not again pass by them any more.* And seeing the word אנך is used in this place only, they have some colour for this interpretation, and I conceive they took the signification of it from a word that is of near sound, and differs but in a letter, viz אנח, which denotes *sighing* and *groaning*, which oppression, you know, causes. Even in Israel you see (if this interpretation be true) where they had fallen from God, he would not exclude the suits of such persons, but take their request into his hands, and let them have a favourable answer. See Ecclus. xxi. 5, and xxv. 13, 14, 15, 17, &c. in the former

[p] V. Lex. Talmud. Vocab. אוֹנָאָה [sub voc. יָנָה.]

of which places there are these remarkable words; *A prayer out of a poor man's mouth reacheth unto the ears of God, and his judgment cometh speedily.* But I am not much concerned to dispute the truth of this gloss, seeing the thing itself which it asserts is otherwise put out of all doubt; and this very prophet Amos presently after saith, (as we noted before,) that these are such works as God cannot forget to punish[q]; and there is such particular notice taken also of the *shedding innocent blood, as an iniquity that he will not pardon*[r]. And therefore, leaving this to obtain what credit it can get with those that are better skilled in that language than myself, I shall conclude this chapter with a brief relation of those causes which are assigned by the Greek historians of the destruction of their empire, and delivery of them unto the power of the Turks.

11. And I shall go no further than Mart. Crusius his notes upon that political history of Constantinople which he set forth[s], where he observes these causes as most notorious amongst others: (1) the injustice and oppression of their emperors, as he instances in Michael Parapinatius, *anno* 1075, and Alexius Comnenus, *anno* 1084, who thought himself not to be οἰκονόμον, but δεσπότην; not the 'father,' (as we speak,) but the 'lord' of the commonwealth. He there notes several unjust acts of his, which gave his people such discontent, that when the Turks came into Asia, many chose rather to submit to them than bear the oppression of the emperor any longer. So Choniates saith in his life[t], whose words are these; "The cruel and inhuman barbarians seemed to be fuller of compassion, kindness, and humanity, than ourselves." (2) He takes notice of the idleness and voluptuousness of the same princes, (which commonly is fain to maintain itself by rapine and violence;) from whence it came to pass, that when the Turks broke in with their forces, they were more fit to sit and spin with girls at home than take their arms into their hands and fight with enemies in the field, as the same Choniates saith.

[q] Amos viii. 7.

[r] 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4.

[s] V. pag. 55. [in Turco-Græcia, lib. i. fol. Basil. 1584.]

[t] Οἱ γὰρ ὠμοὶ καὶ ἀπάνθρωποι βάρβαροι συμπαθεῖς καὶ φιλανθρωπότεροι πλέον ἡμῶν ἐφάνησαν. [Nicetas Choniates, in vita Alexii Angeli Comneni, A.D. 1194.]

(3) The perversity and covetousness of those that chose the emperor, who minded only their own profit, and made no reckoning of a valiant and ancient Roman spirit; so that an infant (as the same author speaks) in his swaddling bands was as good as any else to be promoted, if it would promote their own private designs. (4) Civil wars and the ambitions of great men, which made them sometime fall off from the emperors. (5) The malice of some men against their private enemies made them invite the Turks to come and take their revenge, who were easily allured by the goodness and riches of the country to embrace such motions. (6) Covetousness and the love of riches, which made them that they would not pay garrison soldiers, and so the places were quit. The very navy was neglected through parsimony, and so the islands were lost. And he or some other observes, that the citizens in the last siege would not give a supply of necessary charges for the defence of the city, complaining of their poverty, whenas there were vast treasures found in their houses when it was taken. (7) The insolences and wrongs that the soldiers were suffered to offer to their friends, which made the historian say, that 'they were not like to achieve any thing who went to the war loaded with curses and tears for their *viaticum* in their march.' (8) Treachery and perfidiousness to their enemies; for they kept not faith with the Turks, which much incensed their anger against them. (9) A general neglect of government, insomuch that he saith no care was taken to punish vice; ancient fabrics fell to the ground, the coin was adulterated, and false money stamped, and a great looseness there was in their apparel, which one thing, he saith, wise men looked upon to signify καινοτομίαν καὶ κατάλυσιν βασιλείας, 'the alteration of the government, and dissolution of the kingdom.' I may add the (10th), though not so near to my present subject, and that was, the dissensions and differences that were among other Christians, so that they could not give them relief. But how should such differences have been, and still remain in the world, if there were that love to mercy, kindness, and justice, that God by his prophets and his Son called for? Let all Christians consider how they are concerned in these things, and let them learn, both by ancient and later stories of indubitable credit, to lay aside their angry passions, and their co-

vetous affections, or else they will be their undoing. Man cannot, God will not help it.

CHAP. XIV.

1. *The fourth general head, that if a nation expect settlement, it must establish justice and mercy.* 2. *God is desirous of the peace and quiet of the world.* 3. *But it must be on those conditions, as is proved from what was said to them before the captivity.* 4. *And from the words of the prophets after their return out of it.* 5. *From many other places of Scripture, with which a conclusion is put to the discourse begun chap.* 9.

1. And now I shall descend to the fourth and last thing which I am engaged to treat of; that where peace, settlement, and safety is expected by any nation, they are to have a great care to see whether they be guilty of such things as these, and if they be, deeply to be humbled, and speedily to reform. This commands our regard with the greater authority, because it hath all the former discourses speaking in its behalf. But nothing should more awaken us to mind it than this consideration, that many cozened themselves by a ready performance of some religious duties into a most dangerous security and vain confidence in God, whilst by reason of these sins, (which are accounted by such persons but small petty matters in compare with their glistering piety,) they have been working their own ruin. And I think no nation is more concerned in it than this wherein we live, because God hath begun, shall I say, to smite us, and lay us low, or hath almost laid our honour in the dust; to this land therefore I may well use the prophet Isaiah's words, and say, as it is Is. xxviii. 22, *Now be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong. For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption even determined upon the whole earth.* I mean, let us not make light of all God's admonitions and messages that he sends to us, lest we be bound with such iron chains of affliction as we shall never be able to shake off; for I have assurance from the word of God in the mouth of his prophets, that God will make an utter end, as he hath begun, if we will not put away the evil of our doings.

2. God indeed doth really desire the peace and quiet of nations, and he loves not to afflict them but when there is great need, which should make us reform more speedily when he chastises us, because his chastisements are an indication of great distempers upon us. He doth not always use the same courses to make us good, but he changes his method as he sees most useful for us. As the husbandman sometimes ploughs and breaks the clods, and again, at other seasons, sows his seed, (according as it follows in Isa. xxviii. 24, 25,) so doth God sometimes cut and break us by afflictions, and sometimes instruct us and teach us by his word that he sows among us: and, as the husbandman doth not draw his cart-wheel over the smaller grains as he doth over his wheat, but beats the fitches and cummin out with a rod or a switch, even so doth God in his husbandry upon men's souls; he sometimes afflicts more gently and lightly, and at other times more sharply and heavily, according as the condition of his patients require v. 27. And as the same husbandman will not be ever threshing his wheat, or breaking it with his wheel, or stamping upon it with his horse's hoof, but only so long till he hath separated it from the chaff, v. 28; so doth God likewise afflict and beat us only so long till he hath loosened us from our sins wherein we were settled, as the corn in the ears, and then he ceases. God is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, and he ofttimes shakes nations very sorely, but it is that they may repent, and be divided from their sins, as the wheat by winnowing from the chaff; and then he will settle them more firmly again, and lay them up safely, as the wheat is reposited in the granary after all its knocks and agitations.

3. But then, these things which have exercised my pen so long must (as I said) be carefully repented of and amended. For first, they were proposed to this people before their captivity, as matters to be reformed, if they hoped for any favour from God, as you may read in Hosea chap. x. 12, and chap. xii. 6; and especially in Amos his words to Israel who had been much wasted and spoiled, (chap. iv.,) from the seventh verse of the fifth chapter to the sixteenth, which is again repeated with abundance of earnestness, ver. 21, 22, 23, 34, to this sense, Do not make a noise in mine ears with good words and flattering devotions; away with these offerings and sacrifices in which

you are so forward, but let me see judgment and righteousness like a mighty torrent carry all before it. And to what they say relating to Israel the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah consent, when they speak concerning Judah. This you may understand, if you will be at no more labour but to cast your eyes on Isa. i. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20; lviii. 8, 9, 10, &c., and xxxiii. 14, 15, 16, &c., in which last place you may observe, that when the sinners in Sion saw the great destruction that God had made by the army of Sennacherib, (of which he had been speaking before,) those hypocrites began to be surprised with fear, lest the same burning should be made among them, ver. 14. Now the prophet tells them how to avoid it in the following verses, and saith, ver. 17, that if they did do as he advised them, they should see their king in his beauty, and God would enlarge their territories, and they should be a terror to all their enemies, and they should see no Assyrians among them any more; but Jerusalem should stand for ever, and be like a land of rivers, yet without any enemy to annoy it, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20, &c. And so you may read in Jer. vii. 5, 6, 7, and xxii. 2, 3, 4, 5, where he saith, that if they would execute judgment and righteousness indeed, &c., then kings should still sit upon the throne of David: which very thing they might have learnt from the experience of their fathers, ver. 15, 16, 17, concerning one of whom it is there said, that *he judged the cause of the poor and needy, and then it was well with him. And was not this to know me? saith the Lord.* Yes, this is the business, though you would fain make the world believe that you know God, while you are covetous, unjust, unmerciful, bloody, cruel, and would persuade yourselves that you are a religious people, and shall be in safety; yet there is no such matter; do not deceive yourselves: it went well with your fathers then only, when they did execute judgment and justice, and then they truly had the knowledge of God. Those words indeed are spoken of a particular person, (but concerned all the nation as I have applied them,) and that was Josiah, a good prince, whose son Shallum, it seems, stepped over his brother's head to the crown (for he was the youngest[u]): and therefore is threatened by God to be

[u] 1 Chron. iii. 15.

carried away, and they are bid to weep for him, more than for Josiah who was dead[v]. And then for the next king, who was Jehoiakim, he minded only his own greatness, and built him a fine house by unrighteousness, raising unreasonable taxes, or otherwise oppressing his subjects, and defrauding labourers of their wages[x]: and therefore God threatens him that he shall be buried *with the burial of an ass*, none lamenting for him, his nobles not bewailing him with *Ah my brother*, nor the people or strangers with *Ah lord*, or *Ah his glory*.

4. I need not add, that as without these things they could not be continued in the good land that God gave them, so there was no hopes of any long settlement after they were returned from Babylon's slavery, unless they did carefully observe them: for the prophet Zachary (in the next chapter to that at which this discourse began) doth plainly tell them, as hath been already said, that they must execute judgment and speak truth, and not so much as harbour any evil devices and contrivances against one another in their hearts[y]. Without these their feasts and days of rejoicing (which came instead of their mournful meetings[z]) would do no more to keep the heavens clear and shining upon them, than their fasts and sorrowful days could do before to disperse those black clouds that had gathered about them. And therefore when God tells of such joyful times, he adds this *memento* again, that they should *love truth and peace*. As one of the Jews saith concerning a fast, that *merces jejunii est eleemosyna*[a], the best thing in it, and that which crowns it, is an act of mercy: the same may we say of their feasts, which were all of them like the Athenian σεισάχθεια, in memory of some burden that God had shaken off from their shoulders; and therefore did teach them how kind-hearted they should be to others, and particularly, you know, that as every seventh day they were to let their servants rest, so in every seventh year they were to release them from their service, and to forgive all their creditors who were not able to pay them. And observe these

[v] Jer. xxii. 10, 11.
[x] Ver. 13, 14, 15.
[y] Zech. viii. 16, 17.
[z] Ver. 18, 19.

[a] [אַגְרָא דְתַעֲנִיתָא צְדָקָתָא: 'Eleemosyna jejunii mercedem propriam habet',—J. Plantavit. Floril. Rabbin. § 13. p. 3.]

three things that are said, (in Deut. xv.) about this release, which might have taught them how far they ought to have been from all covetousness and oppression, if they expected God should be good to them. First, if any poor man came a little before that year to borrow money of his neighbour, he was not to forbear to lend him as much as he needed, out of a wicked thought that the time was near after which he could never recover it of him[b]. And secondly, they were not to send away their servants empty when they did release them, but to furnish them liberally with provisions, as God did them when he brought them out of Egypt[c]. And thirdly, that this is made the condition of their having prosperity, ver. 10, *Because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto:* according as he saith concerning that great time of joy, which was after seven times seven years, and when even the servant whose ear was bored went free; that by keeping these statutes, *they should dwell in the land in safety.*

5. *For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; and his countenance doth behold the upright*[d]. *He will bless the righteous; and compass him with favour as with a shield*[e]. *With the merciful he will show himself merciful; with an upright man he will show himself upright*[f]. *The instruments of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand*[g]. When *judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field:* then *the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And his people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places*[h]*:* to the further attesting of which truth, I might remember the reader how that Moab herself was directed to exercise justice, and also to show mercy toward those Jews that should fly to them for refuge; and that because they were proud, and would not hearken to such good counsel, God threatens to shake their foundations, which else might

[b] Deut. xv. 7, 8, 9. [c] Ver. 12, 13, 14, 15. [d] Psalm xi. 7. [e] v. 12.
[f] xviii. 25. [g] Isa. xxxii. 7, 8, [h] Vers. 16, 17, 18.

have been settled, Isa. xvi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; where he bids them pay their tribute as they were wont, though Judah was brought low by the Assyrian kings; and also to let them have a dwelling among them who were expelled by their enemies from their own country. And I might call to his mind also that counsel which Daniel gave to Nebuchadnezzar, as the only means (if there were any left) of lengthening out his tranquillity, viz. *to break off his sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor*[1]. But the thing is so clear already, that he who hath not eyes to see it in this broad light will not be convinced of it by all the labour that I can use. And therefore I shall here put an end to those four things which I propounded to be handled, leaving every man to judge of the truth of these observations.

CHAP. XV.

1. *The reason why I make not a particular application of all that hath been said to the case of our nation.* 2. *Which others may do better than I can, and more to the general good: great need they should, because there is great reason to suspect us guilty of these sins.* 3. *Because so many unjust and unmerciful actions have been committed.* 4. *Every man therefore must search into himself.* 5. *The rulers especially are herein concerned, for sundry reasons.*

1. It may now be expected that I should search into the state of this sinful nation wherein we live, and consider whether our case do not parallel that which I have now described. But I being one of the meanest of those spiritual physicians that are in it, and but of small practice and little experience, do not conceive myself sufficient to make a full discovery of the temper and constitution of it. Healthy I am sure it is not, but desperately sick and like to die; unless God's infinite mercy and our care prevent. But whether it labour of this disease more than any other, which was the plague of the Jewish state, I have not acquaintance enough with particular persons to

[1] Dan. iv. 27.

affirm. But yet I am not so blind as not to see what the actions of some men professing religion have been among us, at whose disease, without coming near them to feel their pulse, an ordinary skill may more than conjecture. And therefore I cannot but suspect that a great many are sick of the same, though I do not know them; and that their zeal and good affection to some duties of piety is but their disease, and not a good habit of their souls.

2. This jealousy made me to take this pains, and to touch this sore something sharply in many passages of this discourse. And let me entreat those that are of greater skill and larger observation, that have had more to do in the world than my years and obscurity would permit me, and whose books are like to come into more hands; let them, I say, make a more exact inquiry into the state of this nation, and when they have passed a judgment upon its proper distemper, tell all the people of it as plainly as they can, the danger in which they lie of being made the people of his wrath. For though I dare not take upon me to be as one of the old prophets, and to say that the nation is generally guilty of all these sins; yet thus much I have more than said, that as they were the ruin of Israel and Judah, so will they bring down God's vengeance on our heads, if they be found to reign among us, unless we unfeignedly forsake them. And this I shall further say, that I very much fear by what I have observed of some, that if a prophet should now arise among us, or in other parts of the Christian, yea the reformed world, he would thunder out against us the same words that I have cited out of the book of God. He would tell us how little difference men make of right and wrong, that they invade one another's right and properties, wallow in blood and cruelty, &c., and yet cry up the purity of religion, the merits of Christ Jesus, and such like things, with as loud a voice as they in the prophet did *the temple of the Lord*. And though men talk much of separating themselves from the world, yet it is a great doubt with me whether he would have any better language for those who are double-refined from popery, and have reformed even the reformation.

3. For sad it is to think what horrid things have been done among us, under the glorious name of Christ Jesus. It is but a small thing to say, that men have *winnowed with every wind*,

and gone in every way (as it is in Ecclus. v. 9), or that they have taken all ways of getting riches, and become any one's creature to become great; or that they have broken the laws and sanctions of the place where they live, to make them serve their ends, with such-like things. For rapine and oppression, cruelty and bloodshed, falseness and perjury, and whatsoever the covetousness or ambition of men would put them upon, have been blanched and whited over with the most specious and fair names of religion, and the honour of God. And one cannot choose but have a fear that this infection hath spread far and near in the nation, seeing it hath been almost an honourable thing to wrong an enemy, and seeing men have had so many rich and inviting occasions (which they call providences) to do against known laws and principles of conscience. Who can then hold his peace from speaking of these things? How can I forbear to wish that I had a voice as loud as Stentor, or like that of Mars in Homer, that I might make these things that I have said to ring in the ears of the people of this land? Though you exalt yourselves as the eagle in highflown devotions, and though you build your nest in the stars, and talk of glorious illuminations, though you think you dwell in the rock, and shall hide yourselves in Christ Jesus, yet from thence will these sins bring you down, and shame shall cover you. I have the word of the righteous Lord for what I say, and I have the testimony of all ages, and mine own eyes have seen those things done which I verily thought would be the ruin of the actors of them, and so they have proved.

4. Let every man therefore enter into his own heart, and consider whether there be any violence in his hands, when he lifts them up in supplications to heaven; any of the blood of the poor and oppressed running about his fingers, when he lays hold of God's mercy; any unjust acquisitions that he is conscious of, when he devotes any thing to his service. If these things be not found among us, we may have hopes that God will not make us a desolation; but if they be, we ought deeply to be humbled for our hypocritical fastings, prayers and humiliations; and for that whilst we *would needs lean upon God*, and *cry, The temple of the Lord*, and *called for the building up of Sion*, we have not minded so much as matters of common justice, equity and mercy between a man and his neighbour.

And we may fear that the Lord will make an utter end of us, unless we do with all speed amend our ways and doings. For the *hypocritical nation* is the *people of God's wrath*[j]; and he *will be avenged of such enemies, and ease himself of his adversaries*[k]. When he goes into his vineyard (as it is, Isaiah v. 7), and *looks for judgment, but behold oppression; and for righteousness, but behold a cry:* when men are come to that pass, that they take the matters of justice but for a trifling business, and hope that the change of so small a thing as a letter, the placing of מִשְׁפָּח in the stead of מִשְׁפָּט, and of צְעָקָה in the room of צְדָקָה, will make no great change in God's affection to his people, and be accounted but a petty oversight[l]: then immediately comes out a woe in the following verse, and a loud asseveration, that *many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair without an inhabitant*[m].

5. If I may be allowed to say any more, it shall be only this: that the rulers of the land must carefully and impartially inquire into themselves about these matters. For first they are more than others concerned in them, as many of those places which I have alleged will tell him that reads them; and (2) they have greater power and temptations to do these things than most of the people; and (3) they raise these sins nearer to the height of the prophetical expressions than the ordinary sort of men can do, (in regard of whom many of those phrases that I have cited must be interpreted with some diminution and abatement;) and (4) God gave a particular command[n] concerning the kings of Israel, that they should not *multiply silver or gold*[o]; i. e. private riches they should not strive to gather into their coffers; for this he knew would make them oppress his people; and *likewise that they should not lift up their heart above their brethren*[p]; i. e. be proud, and despisers of their subjects, for this would make them unmerciful and void of pity toward them; and (5) a prince is called in the holy language by a name, (viz. נָדִיב[q],) which teaches him to be like that Ptolemy who for his good deeds

[j] Isa. x. 6. [k] Isa. i. 24.
[l] [Vid. Vitring. part. i. p. 120; et Critic. Sacr. ad loc. col. 73.]
[m] Ver. 8, 9; and see ver. 20–25.
[n] V. Schickarti Jus reg. Hebr. cap. 3. Theor. 11. [Apud Ugolin. Thesaur. Antiq. Sacr. tom. xxiv. col. 577.]
[o] Deut. xvii. 17. [p] Ver. 20.
[q] V. Schickarti Jus reg. Hebr. [ibid.]

was called εὐεργέτης, 'a benefactor,' one that doth good to all, but harms none of his subjects; and (6) *they cause the people to err*, if they be bad, as it is Isaiah ix. 16, so that every one becomes an *hypocrite and an evil doer, and every mouth speaketh folly*, according as you read in the following verse.

Let us all then, from the greatest to the least, examine ourselves, and be well informed whether we be guilty or clear in this matter; and let us make the same conscience of doing justly that we do of hearing sermons, and of loving mercy that we do of fasting and praying, and then God will dwell in the midst of us. And let no man's heart be so wicked as to think that he shall lose by doing thus; for God saith, *In the house of the righteous is much treasure;* and *righteousness exalteth a nation*[r]: and, *The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish, but he casteth away the substance of the wicked. Blessings are upon the head of the just, but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked. As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation*[s].

CHAP. XVI.

1. *A caution; the reason why these sins were more destructive than others.* 2. *Further cleared.* 3. *The reason why men are more apt to be inclined to zeal for religious duties, than for justice and mercy.* 4. *A further reason of the same thing.* 5. *This zeal may make men take injustice itself to be a just thing.* 6. *It concerns us therefore to look well to ourselves in these matters.* 7. *And Judah should be a warning to England.*

But that this discourse may not be liable to any mistakes, I shall a little further open the sense of what hath been said, whereby likewise it will become more useful to the reader, if he please to attend it. I do not affirm either of these two things; first, that these are the only sins that undo a nation; or, secondly, that these were more heinous in themselves than the idolatry whereof the Jewish nation were also guilty. No,

[r] Prov. xv. 6; xiv. 34. [s] Prov. x. 3, 6, 25.

let me not be so understood, as if I thought that denying of God, blaspheming of his name, worshipping of idols, and such like sins as are more immediately against the Deity, were not wasting sins, and more horrid than the other: but the truths that I assert are these. First, that the sins of injustice, fraud and cruelty, are and have been enough to destroy a nation without the other; and secondly, that they commonly prove the most dangerous and ruinating to a people of any else, because they are overlooked when they reform; though being duties toward our brother whom we continually see, one would think they should be in our eyes above all other. When men reform impieties against God, they think themselves to have done him such high service, and are so much in those upper speculations, that they take no notice of these things under their feet, and make no reckoning how they deal with men, so they be but zealous and fierce for that which is due to God. Or they can be content to be religious, and given to devotion, so they may but retain their unlawful gains, pleasures, and ambitious ends; yea, their very religion and forwardness for reformation in such matters may give them a better advantage more colourably to practise these iniquities; and their unmortified affections will easily put them in mind to make use of such opportunities.

2. Hence I say it is that these sins do more commonly ruin those nations that know God than corruption in his worship doth; not because that is not destructive, but because men will a great deal sooner reform in that than in these other; for a fair correspondence with God in all the outward duties of his worship is a great deal more easy than this denial of men's selves in their covetous, malicious, ambitious, and other fleshly desires. And beside, it is more apt to get a man a great name among others, if it be in any good measure of fervency and heat, and likewise to beget in himself a comfortable opinion that he is mightily beloved of God, seeing he doth those things that are most highly reputed of. So much hypocrisy therefore and deceit being in men's hearts, and they being so willing thus to put a cheat upon themselves, I hope it will not by any be deemed unseasonable that I have treated of this matter rather than of the other. And if any will be so censorious as to say that I have

not pressed the matters of religious worship so much as I ought, they had best take heed that they do not bring our Saviour himself under their lash. For when the ruler asked him what he should do *to inherit eternal life*[u], he doth not say one word concerning the duties of the first table, but only of the second, in which it should seem they were more negligent than in the rest. And when the man answered that he had done all those things that he spoke of, our Saviour doth not catechize him how he had kept the Sabbath, and abhorred idols, and such matters, but he desires him only to be careful of this *one thing* further, which was, that he would wholly take his heart off from covetousness and the love of the world.

3. If any ask how it comes to pass that men should be so very zealous and forward in pious duties, when they are so cold in the other, I have already given him an answer to this purpose. First, the religious services in their greatest outward purity do not find the nature of man so averse unto and abhorrent from them, but that they may be very forward to do them. And, secondly, they make also a great sound and din in the world, and have such a glorious appearance, that by the doing of them he may be reputed and also take himself for a saint. And thirdly, then he may be so pleased with this fine persuasion, and so inwardly tickled with the sweetness of such thoughts, that he is engaged to mind with all his power the promoting of such matters as have gained him the credit of an holy person, without denying his worldly lusts; which may rather have a free liberty under such a brave and splendid Master as stands not upon punctilios of honesty and equity between one man and another. But, fourthly, if we turn our eyes the other way, we shall find that justice and mercy, pity and compassion, forgiveness and doing good to others, (especially to those who have wronged us,) will fall out sometimes with a man's worldly interest and carnal desires, and will put him to learn that hard lesson of self-denial; and besides, they make no such great noise in the world, but must be content to pass with many men for a piece of dull morality. It was most truly said by a wise and a great master, *Nulli facilius ad*

[u] Luke xviii. 18.

magnam pietatis famam perveniunt, quam superstitiosi et hypocritæ[x]*:* 'none sooner obtain a great fame for piety than superstitious persons and hypocrites.' One reason I conceive of it may be, that men who have nothing else to show for their sanctity but their religious performances will be most nice, exact, and even ceremonious about them, and do them with a greater pang of zeal than many cordial Christians. And this easily obtains for them the name of holy and devout persons among men, when honesty, mercy, and a sober religion and piety cannot prevail for so much credit, because they make not such a bustle in the world.

Now you all know how ready men are to stickle for that which draws the eyes of all men to it; and if you do not, the apostle will tell you how soon this disease began in the Christian church. For that which St. Paul reproves in the Corinthians was this, that they made most stir about that which brought them the greatest glory and most credit; preferring gifts of tongues before prophecy, and prophecy before love and charity.

4. And besides, you must consider further how fair an occasion men have to be dishonest, when others rely so much upon their credit, that they will thank them even when they deceive them, and think they have used them very kindly (because they say so) when they have dealt very hardly with them. This makes many dress themselves up religiously, because it is a more cleanly way of catching the prey, when the wolf puts on the sheep's skin. He may devour a silly lamb in a corner, and wipe his mouth, and none can say that he hath done any harm. The well-minded people flock very innocently and simply to a man who is famed for piety; and now if he be a beast of prey, there is no such opportunity as this to devour and raven, because he is taken for one of the sheep of Christ. And therefore it was anciently observed, that no man could so

[x] Ren. Des Cartes. [This sentence was appended by Des Cartes to a paper of Notes, a brief summary of his elementary ideas on metaphysics and religion, put forth at Egmont in Holland in December 1647, and entitled by him 'Programma quoddam, seu explicatio mentis humanæ, sive animæ rationalis, ubi explicatur quid sit, et quid esse possit.' It is annexed to the first part of his Latin Epistles published in London, 4to. 1668, p. 353.]

securely commit all wicked actions as he who had gained the repute of an honest man. Which made the poet in Plutarch advise this as a piece of craft,

> Τοῦ μὲν δικαίου τὴν δόκησιν ἄρνυσο,
> Τὰ δ' ἔργα τοῦ πᾶν δρῶντος ἔνθα κερδανεῖς[y].

'Do all thou canst to be accounted just, and spare to do nothing whereby thou mayest be a gainer.' But then (that I may come nearer to our discourse) what may not, what will not he do, that hath secured not only other men's opinion, but his own also of his honesty and piety, though he hath none, and yet hath very gainful opportunities? This man may spoil and devour with a good conscience, because he takes himself to be a sheep. And having arrived to a conceit of his godliness without these paltry virtues of justice and mercy, he cannot take it to be any part of his godliness to maintain them. If it be a great piece of that policy whereby the devil rules the world, for a man so notably to counterfeit piety, that even when he doth most destroy it, he shall be counted pious (as it was said of Tereus,

> ——*Ipso sceleris molimine Tereus*
> *Creditur esse pius*[z]*;*

'He was cried up for a saint even when he was committing the greatest villainy'); what a notable piece then it is of the devil's craft, so to persuade and inflame a zealous man in religious duties, that he shall pass in his own judgment for a saint! How certainly will he ruin both himself and others! In what a ready way is he to commit all injustice when he is out of all danger of having his own conscience secretly reprove him of hypocrisy and simulation, which the other had not so secured! When out of conscience perhaps he is forward in some things, which make such a noise that they quite drown the voice of conscience in other matters, how easy is it for him to commit all other wickedness with safety, though it be no less dangerous than that which he avoids!

5. But there is an higher secret in this hypocritical godliness than hath been yet named; and that is, when even in-

[y] Plut. De Aud. Poetis. [p. 18. ex incerto poeta.]
[z] [Ovid. Metam. vi. 473.]

justice itself is accounted but a piece of zeal for God. When men are so hot that they will even sin against their conscience for God's sake, they take themselves, you must needs think, to have highly merited at his hands. Thus some Greek Christians in Crete did once handle the poor Jews; getting their riches from them by false and slanderous accusations of them before the magistrate, and thinking that they did God good service in so doing: insomuch that their patriarch Metrophanes was fain to write to them to forbear such violence and injustice, under pain of being excommunicated and cast out of the church. In which letter he hath this remarkable passage worthy of the consideration of all fiery zealots, "Let no man think he is excused of his injustice by saying ὅτι ἑτερόδοξον ἠδίκησε καὶ οὐκ εὐσεβῆ, that he did not wrong the godly, but a fellow that was not orthodox[a]." For our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel said, *Do violence to no man*[b]. Where he makes no difference of persons, nor permits any man for any cause ἀδικεῖν ἀλλοτριόφρονας, 'to do wrong to those that are of a wrong belief, or not of our opinion.' You see with what absurd fancies a false godliness inspires men's hearts. When they are once intoxicated with an high conceit that their religious affections have made them God's darlings, they think that all the world should be theirs, and that nothing is too good for them, but that others deserve to be turned out of all. It easily swells them into this fierce belief, that it is no wrong to take from those that love not Jesus Christ, especially seeing it is to be given to themselves. Yea, it lifts them up even to a throne itself, and makes them think it no injustice to thrust another out, that one of God's beloved children may sit in the place. And though you shall hear nothing more in such people's mouths than justice, justice, yet by that they mean nothing else but to have that done which is agreeable to their own desires, which are the only rule of right and justice.

6. For the Lord's sake therefore, for your own, and the nation's sake, mind these things that have been said more seriously. And do not look upon these as matters of a less moment and inconsiderable nature, which need not be so much pressed upon men's practice, nor the pulpits so much sound

[a] Crus. Turco-Græc. lib. iv. [p. 281.] [b] Luke iii. 14.

of, lest by this means the priest and the people should both perish together. Hear the prophet Isaiah speak once more, and if you listen well to what he saith, it may make you fear lest the tongues of the prophets among us have been too silent and sparing in calling for these things: *Note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord; which say to the seers, See not, and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits; get ye out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us*[c], &c. They would not have the prophets speak to them of things that were right and honest, which had too much of severity and rigidness in them, for such dainty darlings as they took themselves to be; but desired some soft and sleek, some flattering and delicate, though deceitful doctrines to be preached to their tender ears. They wished that they would cry *Peace, peace,* עשו כתאבותכם (as Kimchi there notes), 'do according to your hearts' desire, and it shall be well with you;' and when they thus lulled them asleep, and abused them, then they applauded them for good men and excellent preachers. They could not endure that they should run in the old beaten way, and preach so much strictness of righteousness to them: no, they say, find some new smooth path wherein we may go without any rub to our own lusts; *Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us;* i. e. let us hear nothing of the Holy One any more; or do not press holiness so earnestly and frequently upon us. But what will God do with such a people, or what is his judgment of them? Can he be content to let them go whither they will, and follow after them still with his love? The 12th, 13th, and 14th verses will give you an answer to this: *Thus saith the Holy One, Because you despise this word,* (i. e. because you like not to hear of the Holy One,) *and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon,* (i. e. hoping to fare well enough, and by your money to hire the Egyptians to help you,) *therefore* (and mark, good reader, what the Holy One, the righteous God, that hates iniquity, saith) *this iniquity shall be to you as*

[c] Isa. xxx. 8, 9, 10, &c.

a breach ready to fall, swelling out in an high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant, &c.; i. e. though you have built high confidences to yourselves, yet they will all deceive you; and just as you see a lofty wall doth swell some time, and burst on a sudden; and besides that it falls down upon those that are under it, who dream of no such thing, it also crumbles into dust or little bits that can be put to no use at all: such shall your ruin be. First, total, because you shall be all broken in pieces, and nothing of your city remaining; and secondly, inevitable, because unexpected, and not believed through the deceit of your hearts and your false confidences in other things, while you remained guilty of oppression and such like sins.

7. And then you shall find in the 17th verse of the same chapter, that he saith, they *shall be left as a beacon on the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.* The vulgar Latin renders it, 'as the mast of a ship on the top of a mountain,' and some give this sense of it; they should be as a sea-mark to them that sail, that they may hold a right course, and not split themselves on those rocks that others have done. I pray God that Judah and Israel may be so to England, and that all men would look upon them, and beware how they touch upon their sins, which will dash us in pieces, and make this island to become the like sign to all the nations round about us. And the Lord open every man's eyes, that he may see how far he is concerned in any of these truths, that he may pass sentence on himself, if he love not holy sermons, and prevent the condemnation of the Lord: *who hath set his throne for judgment; who will judge the world in righteousness, and minister judgment to the people in uprightness. His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth*[d].

[d] [Ps. ix. 7, 8; xi. 4, 5.]

CHAP. XVII.

1. *An entrance to a more particular discourse about false religions. Hypocrisy double.* 2. *Atheistical hypocrisy.* 3. *It is threefold; first, out of a design to be great.* 4. *Secondly, to serve the pleasures of the flesh.* 5. *Thirdly, to hide some dangerous opinions.* 6. *Pharisaical hypocrisy, what it is.* 7. *How men come to get such a good conceit of themselves while they are vicious.* 8. *They may deceive themselves; but not God: the danger of it.*

1. HAVING thus passed through the Jewish story in the Old Testament, and made it as serviceable as I could to the present age, I begin to consider that it will be very profitable for to give a more particular description of that false religion that domineers so much in the world, whereby men cozen their souls, without undertaking an universal piety towards God, together with justice and charity toward their neighbours. And for an introduction to that discourse I think fit to distinguish with a very great divine[d] (one of whose sermons put me into the foregoing meditations) concerning a double hypocrisy; the one of the atheist, the other of the Pharisee.

2. The former is very gross and palpable, whereby a man labours to cozen the world with a mask of religion, which he puts on as he sees occasion, for the serving of some worldly ends, that he knows not how better to advance than by such a disguise. The men of this sort have a perfect resemblance to the gentleman in Ælian[e], who being to go into the presence of the Persian king, before whom he was to make such adoration as he had not a mind to give him, he let fall his ring at his entrance in the presence-chamber, and so his stooping to take it up passed for a worship of that great majesty. These atheistical spirits seem to worship God, and make very lowly addresses unto him, when indeed they do but stoop to their own interest, and are but taking up some worldly thing, to which they have more mind than to be godly. Religion (as a learned man[f] of our own speaks) is but a politic engine of state in some men's hands, but of such power, that it is useful

[d] D. Jackson. [The second sermon upon Jer. xxvi. 19: Commentaries on the Creed, book vi. vol. vi. p. 76.]

[e] [Ismenias of Thebes,—Ælian. Var. Hist. i. 19.]

[f] Mr. Greg. Annot. [ch. 31. Of the Shekinah.] p. 144. [4to. Oxf. 1646.]

for the battery as well as the defence of the state, and as serviceable to the ruin as the conversion of a commonwealth. A very necessary thing it is, as they handle it, to the turning of affairs here below; but of no concernment at all to the other world.

3. And of these that put on a face of religion out of design, there are three sorts which I will unmask before you; the first is he that designs his profit and utility when he sees that religion is a fair means whereby he may rise to greatness, a ladder whereby he may climb to high preferments. When he discerns the times are of that temper, that religion will make a good mask to hide his covetous, ambitious, and perfidious intendments from the eyes of well meaning and charitable men; when he perceives that it will make him to be more trusted, and that a greater confidence shall thereby be reposed in him; there is no man shall have a more saint-like garb, a more reformed tongue, and devout behaviour. Many petty chapmen in the world that trade but for little things have learnt this art, to gain credit and repute with others, that so they may suffer themselves to be cheated by them with more faith and confidence. We may be sure then that the great ones of the world, who design higher matters, and aim at more lofty ends, are well versed in these religious tricks of deceiving. Herod pretended religious devotion and worship, which he would fain give to Christ, when he intended that this Lamb of God should be the sacrifice. Numa, among the ancient Romans, pretended revelations and familiarity with a goddess, but it was to make himself a god among the people, and his laws held for sacred. And so the great impostor Mahomet (as is in every one's mouth) held his neck awry, as if he looks for a whisper from heaven, when his head hung towards the world, and he meant only to get his doctrine to be more devoutly devoured by the people. The masters of policy know that their talk of God, their praying to him, and their solemn attendance on all religious offices, together with a sanctimonious carriage and seeming squeamishness of conscience, will make them more reverenced by the multitude, and less suspected to have any but good and simple designs. They know that these things will make the world gape upon them, and swallow all their proposals without any chewing; or else they will make them cast all the odium of their wicked actions upon other men, and

hold them excused as men whose integrity would not suffer them to do so badly; or, at the worst, pass them by for religious weaknesses and infirmities, unto which all are incident. It is not to be told what the name of a saint will do to hallow those actions which in other men would seem as black as the devil, to cast a varnish and a most handsome gloss upon the most hellish and foulest enterprises. And therefore the politician had been much defective if he had left this rule out from among the rest, that a man who would be great in the world must be externally religious: and the greater grace and comeliness he is able to act religion withal, the more eyes he shall have upon him, and the more will fall down and worship him.

4. A second sort there is that design their own ease, pleasure, and brutish delights, whom I may call the fleshly politicians: men that are cunning in this art of religion, that thereby they may enjoy the foul delights of the flesh with more security, and with the favourable opinion of the multitude. By a great show of something that is extraordinary in devotion, they hope to draw the eyes of the world from their beastly life, and make them gaze at the strange appearances that they say is of God in them. They hope, by making a blaze on high, to make men take no notice of what is done here below; just as they see, while the vulgar stare at some comets that appear in the heavens, they neglect what is under their feet more apparent upon the earth. And therefore they resolve to talk of wonderful manifestations, discoveries, and appearances of God to them; they rise presently into the clouds in their expressions, and discourse of divine things in a mystical strain; they speak of revelations and high illuminations from heaven, and use perhaps some very fiery devotions, which dazzle the vulgar's eyes and amaze their understanding, so that they cannot see their wicked and abominable practices. But if men will needs be prying into their secrets, and when they see them, will not in charity excuse men of such high attainments; then they begin to rant more confidently, and boldly to affirm that all things are lawful to men of such a growth, and in such special favour with God, and led so certainly by his Spirit. Or if they do not go thus high, yet they take up the religion that is in fashion, on purpose that they may avoid all sufferings and persecution, and that they may

never receive any molestation in their beloved flesh. They are resolved to do any thing, that they may never feel any pain; and if religion be the way to preserve them from it, they will make it their pleasure to counterfeit it as exactly as they can. Such are the leviathans of this age, who love to tumble up and down in the flood of worldly delights, and would rather imitate all religions than be of any. The great pillar of their religion is self-preservation, though our Saviour hath expressly said, that *he who will save his life shall lose it, and he who will lose it shall find it.*

5. A third sort may have it in their design to spread some dangerous notions and traitorous opinions against God, for the hiding of which it is but necessary that they seem very strictly pious. All men are very shy of a professed atheist, or of one that denies the Bible to be God's word; and therefore they that would disseminate any thing to the prejudice of that belief we have of a Deity and of the holy Scriptures, must look as if they were of all men the furthest off from such profaneness. And though they laugh in corners at the ridiculous simplicity (as they deem it) of those that fear before God, and tremble at his word; yet before others they can put on a sour face, and seem to do more than stand in awe of him. But these players and actors in religion it is not my design to set forth in all their colours, both because they are not so numerous as the other, and because they cannot stand long upon the stage before they go off, and every one know what they are.

6. The pharisaical hypocrisy is a more fine and subtle poison, whereby a man cozens himself, and puts a cheat upon his own soul; and therefore about the discovery of it I shall bestow all my pains, as most latent, and standing in greatest need of a cure. This is it also which the Scripture speaks of, in whose phrase, hypocrisy, flattering of God, and lying to him with one's lips, do not signify the professing of one thing and meaning another, but a present profession of love to God and religion, without a cordial renouncing of every thing that is contrary to him and it: or a great heat and forwardness to some things that God commands, which are easy and more suitable to a man's gust and humour, with a coldness to other things that are more difficult and contrary to his nature and interest. There is an extraordinary measure of zeal for some

matters required to its constitution, else they in whom it is would not be so confident as they are that they are good Christians; but then this zeal is not equally distributed through the whole man, and doth not animate and quicken him to all his duty; and that is it which makes it to be hypocrisy, and not true religion. As for example; if a man have this partial zeal in hearing of God's word and diligent attending upon sermons, this may make him take himself for a saint; whereas his frozenness to meditation and secret converse with God, and diligent examination of all his actions, renders him a mere hypocrite. So if he be partially zealous for the purging of himself from superstitious conceits and popish tenets, but yet remain a mammonist, a Lucifer, a murderer of his brethren by hatred and uncharitable censuring of others that differ from him; this is the same disease, though he take himself for a man excellently pious. And, on the contrary, if a man be just in his dealing, and careful not to cheat, but yet be all bedaubed with the world, and laden with thick clay, and stick fast in covetousness, or neglect many religious duties to God-ward; he is but an hypocritical religionist, though he keep his church, and pay the minister his dues as well as others.

7. And if you should ask me, why this good conceit that men have of their piety may not be easily beaten down, when it is so visible that they live in great sins, and have not denied abundance of their earthly affections; I answer, that their first resolutions to undertake some duties of religion are commonly very warm, if not hot and fiery, which inspires them presently with a persuasion that they are dearly beloved of God, because they feel such a difference in themselves from what they were before in their total coldness. Now though they continue to live in many sins, yet this persuasion doth not abate, (1) because this zeal doth continue and hold on afterwards through the concurrence of their particular temper with it, which inclines them to that sort of actions, or doth not make them averse from them. And (2) then they may think it to be a temptation of the devil, to doubt of their good estate after they have had such great assurance (as they imagine) from God. And (3) they find a desire to do those things that they do not, which they take to be a great sign of grace: especially seeing (4) that they are troubled for the not doing of them, and they

have now and then some sad thoughts about it. Yea (5) their conscience perhaps is much against it when they do it, and they commit such sins not without great reluctance and difficulty: which indeed renders their condition the worse, because they can sin even against conscience: but they take it to be a sign of their tenderness, not of their sins' strength. And (6) perhaps they have learnt to call such sins their infirmities, and hearing that all have their failings, these they think are theirs. And (7) by their confessions and prayers, and outward humiliations, they hope to gain pardon for all: or (8) perhaps they think there is no need: but by a device beyond all these, they imagine Jesus Christ hath done all for them long ago. And so the less they do, the more they shall be beholden to him; and the more honour they do him by putting more upon his account than others dare do, who will be doing more themselves.

8. Thus, I say, do they ratify that decree which they have passed for themselves in heaven: they having so certainly foreordained that they shall inherit eternal joys, none of those foul blemishes that are in their actions can blot out their names, which they have written in the book of life. But though they think that nothing can hinder their admission to that blessed place which they have designed for themselves; yet God, I am sure, hath chosen no such persons to salvation. If the holy apostle be not less infallible than they, you had better believe him, when he saith, that *God hath chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*[g]; and when he prays *that the whole spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus*[h].

These men may mount up while they are in some holy exercise as high as the third heavens, and think verily that they are in God's embraces; but they will find shortly that all their hopes will fall to the ground, as that Turk did from the top of the mosque, who persuaded the people that he could fly. And therefore let us be sure to lay the foundations of a solid and entire religion in our souls, and take heed we do not deceive ourselves with some flashy devotions, and a lame, halting obedience. To mortify all our carnal affections, to put off the body of sin, is the work of a Christian; and because of the

[g] 2 Thess. ii. 13. [h] 1 Thess. v. 23.

multitude of our enemies, and the infirmities of our flesh, we shall find it a matter hard and difficult. How insuperable then will this work be, if our religion itself do conspire with the flesh, and if that which should serve for the destroying of sin do by a great many false principles exceedingly promote it! That it may not do so, but that our religion may be in us a Divine nature, I shall now proceed to show you what the counterfeits of it are, and how small a matter, if we be not serious, will tickle us with a belief that we are good Christians, without a total change of our hearts and lives.

CHAP. XVIII.

1. *The story of the Jews in the New Testament to be minded as well as in the Old: and we find them great professors.* 2. *But their religion was only talk.* 3. *And with such windy religion still men deceive themselves: good words may move a man's affections, and so cozen him.* 4. *Others delight only in high flown and obscure language.* 5. *An high proficiency they take themselves to have made, if they dare leap into a pulpit.* 6. *The sins of such men: A short description of true religion in reference to this matter.*

1. Now for the more full discovery of the several kinds of this hypocrisy, I think it will be best to examine the New Testament story, as I have done the Old, and see what the temper of the Jews was in our Saviour's and the apostles' time: who will give us as perfect a character of this false spirit, as their forefathers did in their example. And the apostle tells us in Tit. i. 6, that *they of the circumcision* (for of them he speaks, ver. 10.) *did profess to know God, though in their works they did deny him.* By their very name, *they of the circumcision*, we may learn that their religion consisted in outward, not in inward things, and that it was *in the flesh and letter*, not in the *heart and spirit*. But yet for all this they were great professors of the most excellent skill in divine matters, and of the highest sanctity and purity above all other men. For the word *know* signifies an insight into the deepest

mysteries, and also a piety beyond the common strain: according as Clemens Alexandrinus often uses the word γνωστικοὶ, or 'knowers,' for the most spiritual and holy persons, in opposition to fleshly and brutish men, and for persons of more recondite and abstruse learning in sacred writ, in opposition to those that are but of a vulgar apprehension: in short, they are, in his language, men of a perfect virtue and knowledge. Now this great and illustrious name many vile men arrogated to themselves, taking upon them to be the most pure and refined of all other, whilst they lived in a sensual manner. And some of the Jews, it seems, were of this party, who though they were like other of the people of Crete, lying, lazy, and guttling sots, (ver. 11,) yet they gave out that they above all others were acquainted with God, and had his secrets committed to them: yea, so zealous they were, that they made a considerable party in the world, and by their clamour and noise, decrying all others, they made many weak Christians doubt whether they were not in the right way, and maintained the best religion. For they were a very confident sort of men, and those that looked with a kind of disdain and scorn upon the rest of the world; so that the humble and meek servants of Jesus Christ, lest they should be outbraved by impudence and taken for a company of silly sneaks, were fain to rebuke them sharply, (ver. 13,) and to use some severity toward them. You may see this more plainly, if you read but Rom. ii. 17, 18, 19, 20, where the apostle tells us what the boasts and brags of the Jews were concerning their knowledge, and how they looked upon all others as children and fools that must be taught by them.

2. But the best of these men's religion was only *big words and loud talk concerning God,* as the apostle tells us in the same Tit. i. 10, where he calls them *vain talkers.* Though some of them knew much, yet they did nothing but tell others of it, with a mixture of their own idle dotages. And a great many of them knew the meaning of nothing they said, but, right or wrong, poured out texts of scripture as fast as they could[5]; and others amused the vulgar minds with a great deal of mystical stuff and cabalistical conceits, which the apostle

[5] 1 Tim i. 7.

calls *Jewish fables*[h]. Men of large imaginations and wide mouths, of quick fancies and nimble tongues; to the former of which their religion owed its procreation and begetting, to the latter its birth and exclusion to the sight of the world.

3. Such a wordy religion there is still in the world, and it makes the greatest noise of all others, because it is a sound. The men who profess it hold no gift greater than that of talking, and they had need be thankful that they are not dumb; for if they were, there would appear no more of religion in them than in an old statue of some ancient saint. But though their religion be but wind, yet they are blown up with their own breath into a conceit of sanctity. And though they have not so much as some Jews, viz. a μόρφωσις, a *form of knowledge*, (Rom. ii. 20,) an exact draught of the Bible in their minds, yet these smatterers in Christian doctrine can make a shift to babble others and themselves into a belief of their great attainments. It is ordinary to hear men talk so long of the beauty, and glory, and sweetness, and preciousness of Christ, that they beget in themselves, as well as their hearers, a persuasion that they are mightily in love with him. There is nothing but glory, and lustre, and splendour, and such shining language, when they speak of God; they gild him with beams and rays, and have none but golden and silver, and other rich expressions concerning him; which makes them think that they are rapt in admiration of his excellencies. If they speak of Christ, they paint him in Solomon's language, *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands, with a head of fine gold, locks bushy and black as a raven*, &c.[i] If of the church, you shall have a discourse set with all the gems, and pearls, and precious stones that can be found in the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation. If of communion with God, then you may hear of the bed of Solomon, that is *paved with love and covered with purple, and sustained with pillars of silver for the daughters of Jerusalem*[k]. Who would not be ravished that hears of all these delicate fine things? What heart can choose but be taken with all this beauty and bravery? And how can we think that it is not enough to transport the man himself into heaven, to see others so moved and drawn by him? And yet all the while this goodly do is made, the man may not

[h] Tit. i. 14. [i] Cant. v. 10, 11. [k] iii. 10.

know himself what he means by all these expressions. They make a fine noise, and run smoothly off the tongue, but they are little better, as they handle the matter, than nonsignificant expressions to themselves and others. I shall not now add how many new words are minted and huddled together to supply the want of solid matter; nor how many men's tongues are tipped with good words which they have heard from the discourses of others; but shall only say this, that these men talk of God either in such words as have no fulness of sense in them, but are devoid and empty of all true life, or else in such words whose sense and life they have no feeling of in their souls.

4. And yet I have told you of the best that can be found of this sort of religion. There are others that mind not so much this fluency and abundant language, but their greatest care is to speak so that they may not be understood, but admired by the rabble as great *sophis*, and men of a more than ordinary elevation. I wish this had been the religion only of some in the first times, who made a great deal of stir about the πλήρωμα or the 'fulness,' the βῦθος or the 'depth,' and as Irenæus saith, scraped up many scripture phrases, many holy words, σποράδην κείμενα, 'that were scattered here and there,' and made up a body of nonsense out of them. Alas! this is one of the diseases of our age also, wherein many men have affected unintelligible language, and believed they were eagles that were courted to look upon the sun, because they could soar aloft into a cloud of words: when they had taken abundance of prophetical expressions, and carelessly jumbled them into a confusion, they seemed to themselves like men inspired and that spoke oracles, when they did but slaver out their own transcendent nonsense.

5. And if these men can but arrive to the confidence of prating saucily to their betters, this is reputed a singular gift, and they take themselves to be endued with an extraordinary measure of zeal for God and his cause. But if they can perk up into the pulpit, and take the boldness to be preachers and instructors to others; this is an infallible mark, and now they cannot doubt but they are full of the Spirit of God. This is the thing that tickles them more than all the rest; and their forefathers the scribes and Pharisees never loved more to sit in Moses's chair, (Matt. xxiii. 2,) than their fingers itch to be laying the law before the ignorant people.

6. But let such men who delight to hear themselves talk consider (if they have not lost that faculty whereby we are men), that there may be twenty times more religion in humble learning than in this bold teaching of others; and that there is a thousand times more in hearty doing of what men learn. To that let them bend their studies, and observe how greedy they are of riches, how they scramble for high places, how worthy they think themselves of what others enjoy, how they love to rule and command over them, how impatient they are of contradiction, how ambitious to be thought somebody in the world, how censorious of their neighbours, how fiery and hot against dissenters, how fierce and violent for their opinion more than for godliness: and then, if they believe the scriptures, let them judge whether the leaven of hypocrisy have not soured them. And let us all remember, that true religion is a transforming sense of God, that which changes and alters the tempers of men's souls, that which seasons and leavens the whole man with goodness: it is not a new tongue, but a new nature; it consists not in reformed language, but in a reformed life; not in talking concerning God, but in an imitation of him, and being conformed to him. And then a well seasoned heart will make all the words savoury and without affectation, though with good affection.

CHAP. XIX.

1. *Of the love the Jews bare to Moses.* 2. *Whenas they hated that which Moses chiefly aimed at, and had only a fancy to him as a gallant person.* 3. *The same love now men think they have to Jesus Christ.* 4. *But no better than the love men have to persons of desert, and that do them kindnesses.* 5. *Such men therefore like the Pharisees. They love Christ now he is dead and never saw him, better than if they had lived with him.*

1. But some may say to me, Can you think that such people as you have described have no love to Jesus Christ, of whom they speak so much? I will give an answer to this, by describing another piece of Jewish hypocrisy, and that was their extraor-

dinary love to Moses. Moses! What a great and sacred name was that, and never out of their mouths! It was a wonder the Egyptian charmers did not put it into their forms of incantation, as they did the name of Abraham and others[l], seeing they boasted no less of it. The Arabians, who held him for a god, could not give him a greater veneration than his countrymen did. They professed themselves Moses his disciples, and say that they are sure God spake by him; but esteem our Saviour a sorry fellow in compare with this great master[m]. In Moses they trusted[n], and blasphemy against him they would prosecute with the same revenge that they did blasphemy against God. Nay, Moses was first in their mouths when they accused St. Stephen, and they said that he had spoken *blasphemous words against Moses and against God*[o]. There is no question to be made but that they would have spit in that man's face who should have told them that they did not love Moses. They would have defied his words, and given him the lie a thousand times; and you might have as soon persuaded them that there was never such a man, as that they did not bear an affection to him. And for this very cause it was that they killed our Saviour, because they thought he contradicted this grand teacher of their religion, and imagined they did God high service in so doing.

2. And yet, if you make a little further search into the business, you shall find that they loved Moses no otherwise than as vulgar people love queen Elizabeth; as a brave man, and one who did great things for that nation, and in whose days there was a good world. If Moses had lived in our Saviour's time, and told them of their sins as he did, they would have loved Moses no more than thieves and traitors loved the queen, who would not let them steal or betray their country. If Moses should have risen from the dead, and told them that he allowed divorces only because of the hardness of their hearts, they would have given him a bill of divorce, though so much wedded to him. If he had said the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of their promises, they would have looked upon him as *an heathen and a publican:* and he should not have escaped to have been ranked among the sinners, if he had dropped a word against

[l] Epiphan. Hær. Melchisid. [hær. lv. al. xxxv. tom. i. p. 468.]
[m] John ix. 28, 29. [n] John v. 45. [o] Acts vi. 11.

their legal righteousness. Nay, if he had said to them but one of the Ten Commandments, *Thou shalt not covet*, those Pharisees would have been ready to cast stones at him for not receiving their glosses whereby that command was evacuated. They had an high esteem of him, and affection to him, as he had been a great benefactor to their nation; but the best of his laws, his spirit and qualities, they perfectly hated. And therefore our Saviour tells them, that though they did beautify the sepulchres of such righteous persons as their fathers had slain, and thought they should not have done such a thing for all the world; yet they had the same murderous affections against those holy men, and would have dipped their hands as soon in their blood, had they lived in those times. For they hated such men then as their fathers hated heretofore; and so all the blood that had been shed in former ages did light upon them, because they inherited their ancestors' sins as well as their lands.

3. Even so it is now with many in the Christian world: the name of Jesus is so dear unto them, that they have it in their mouths as much as the Jews had the name of Moses. It is so full of honey and sweetness, and they are so fond of it, that it is on their tongue's end before the name of God himself. This name makes up one quarter of their prayers, and fills up all the gaps and breaches that are in their discourses; and if there be any expressions of love and courtship wherewith to caress him, he shall not want them. They commend him for the primest beauty, extol his pedigree, admire the riches of grace, and, if one could tell how to believe them, they would willingly die for the love of their beloved Jesus. No sermon pleases them that extols not him; all discourses are unprofitable in which his name is not often repeated, and the very sound of it doth them more good than many wise sentences.

4. But you must not think, for all this, that they are such vowed servants of his as they seem. For they love him only as a beggar doth his good master, or as a soldier doth Alexander, Cæsar, or some such famous captains of whose great worth and valour he hath heard. As the Spartans honoured Lycurgus, and the Romans Romulus, and all countries and cities love those that have been their founders, or procurers of great immunities and benefits unto them; so do these persons love the

Lord Jesus. They look upon him as a noble hero, a brave man that hath done great wonders, and deserved highly of mankind; and especially they are affected toward him as one that is gone to make room for them in a goodly paradise, and will there entertain them with all dainty delights: which is no more but what may proceed from education and breeding, from pulpit discourses and good books, from a fancy of those joys that he hath promised, which are enough to make a sensual man love him as well as a Turk doth Mahomet: especially considering that some dispositions are amorous, and others are apt to admire gallant acts and great exploits, and others are wonderfully taken with the kindnesses that are done them, and the honours that are put upon them. If they should have lived in our Saviour's days, and he should have told them, *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father;* they would have said as the Pharisees in another case, *Are we blind also?* do not we know who shall go to heaven? If he had said, *You are of your father the devil, for his works you do;* they would have answered as the Jews did sometimes, *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.* If he had told them that he had no blessings but for the humble, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, and those that took up their cross patiently, (of which number they were not,) they would have joined with the high priest to bring him to his execution.

5. What though they condemn the Pharisees for killing of our Saviour? It is no more than those men said of their forefathers that murdered the prophets. And they are as full of hatred, malice, and black zeal against Christ's most faithful servants, as the Scribes and Pharisees were against Christ himself. They verily think that they have a love to Christ above all the world; but did not the Jews dream of as great an affection to Moses? Either they do not love the world therefore, and their own lusts and desires better than Christ's words, or they are no better than those Jews were who loved no more but the name of their master Moses.

They have a great zeal for the worship of the Lord Jesus, but who knows not that the persons whom they judge as hypocrites were very fierce for the ceremonial law, and loved to be at the temple? We must see therefore a great care, diligence

and curiosity used in all obedience, or else we cannot afford them any better language, notwithstanding all their flattering addresses to our Saviour. And you must consider what a vast difference there is between the opinion men are apt to have of those who are dead, and of those that are like them, but alive. All men love naturally to speak well of the dead, especially if they did no harm, but good. And those that they never saw, but hear of their excellent deeds, they have in greater admiration than those that are before their eyes. And those very persons that they could not affect if they were with them, they commend at a distance, as they hear them commended by others. For they commonly hear of nothing but what pleases them when they are afar off: but they would see many actions, and hear many sayings if they conversed with them, that they could not brook. And just so it is in this case; our Saviour is dead, and he likewise died, as they hear, for them, and therefore they cannot but have many good words for him. He is one that they never saw, and so they admire him for the good they are told of him, while they despise his live images and those that are like him. They read of his actions and his words at a distance, but they are not spoken from his mouth to their particular persons: and therefore they are not so offended at him as they would have been, if they had received his reproofs in such sort as they did who then lived.

CHAP. XX.

1. *Of false pretences to inspiration.* 2. *Whence these swellings in the head do arise, and how you may know them.* 3. *Concerning the kingdom of Christ, so much talked of.* 4. *How loath they are to submit to Christ's government, who think they wait for his kingdom.* 5. *Opposition to antichrist, a false token of men's being on Christ's side.* 6. *For they may have the very spirit of antichrist in them.*

1. But there are a company of more glorious professors than these, who pretend such love to Jesus Christ, and take themselves to be so beloved of him, that they are lifted up into an imagination of receiving revelations from him. Their reli-

gion is to look after news from heaven, to raise themselves into raptures and dreams of prophetical inspiration. They talk of extraordinary light. Glorious discoveries, manifestations, illumination of the Holy Ghost, are the words that adorn their discourses. And so St. Peter tells the Jewish Christians, (for to them he wrote, being the *apostle of the circumcision,*) that there should *false teachers* [p] arise among them, as false prophets had done anciently among their forefathers. By these I nothing doubt he means some that boasted of inspirations, and further revelations from God, which the Jews might be most forward of all others to pretend unto, because they took themselves to be beloved of God beyond all the people of the earth. And St. Jude calls them expressly ἐνυπνιαζόμενοι [q], which we render *filthy dreamers*; but it signifies 'such as were carried with dreams.' There were, you know, several ways of God's revealing himself of old to his prophets; whereof dreams and visions were most usual. Now these persons had a strong fancy that they received some impressions from God, and were divinely moved in their dreams; when they were but the vapours and reeks of their own flesh, which their aspiring minds agitated them withal. And Epiphanius applies the place to the Gnostics, whose fables and dotages the apostle (he saith) reproves, which were more like the talk of a man in a dream than well awake.

2. And it is likely that both the Jewish and Christian dreamers have fallen into this spiritual phrensy by that same heat which I before spoke of [r], whereby they persuaded themselves too early that they were saints. When this meets with a melancholy temper and a selfish disposition, it is no hard matter to beget in them an opinion of near converse with God or angels. For when that fierce humour works and boils up, all experience tells us that it puts men into high and big conceits, if they be of a proud nature. And then their religious inclinations and affections determine the workings of this melancholy fancy to matters concerning God and his Son, and holy Spirit. These motions they may take to be from a Divine power, because they are so great, and because they are so much different from what they feel when in their ordinary temper. And this self-love may make them conceit likewise that none are like to receive

[p] 2 Pet. ii. 1. [q] Jude 8. [r] Cap. xvii. n. 7. [p. 128.]

from God such inspirations sooner than themselves; who have such a love to him, and presuppose that they are so much in his affections. Now I hope there are not many at this time of this complexion in religion; but when there are, you have two remarkable characters given of them by St. Jude in that verse: they are given to the grossest sensualities, and are likewise turbulent and seditious persons. By which they make it plainly appear that Christ is not in them, who was holy meek and peaceable, and makes all those to be so on whom his Spirit breathes.

3. But there are others of a lower form, who confidently talk of the mind of God likewise made known to them, and are altogether busied in their fancies about the glorious times that are ensuing. The Jews do not more expect their Messiah, and think to be made great men by him, than these wait to see Christ come to reign, or at least themselves advanced to sit upon thrones to govern the nations. They take themselves to be the candles that are to enlighten all the darker places of holy writ. They are as familiarly acquainted with Daniel, as others are with the proverbs of Solomon. They understand St. John's Revelation as well as they do his three Epistles. And I shall not much disbelieve them in this particular; for their religion hath nothing to do with that love and sweetness, that charity and humility which he commends. While they fancy themselves kings with Christ, they neglect his government in their souls, which should keep under all their headstrong passions, quell their rebellious affections, tame their wild natures, and restrain their brutish desires, which would indeed make that new world of things which all good Christians pray for. They conceit a gorgeous pompous scene of things, a secular and worldly greatness, an overflowing tide of prosperous events, while they neglect that poverty of spirit, that lowliness of mind, that meekness, patience, long-suffering, and such-like royal graces as make Christians conquerors over the world, and victors of all their enemies. And therefore they are to be accounted among those whose religion is only words, and great brags arising from an high conceit of favour with God; who loves those that will be guided by his will and ruled by his laws, better than those that would fain fulfil prophecies, and pour out some of his vials upon the earth.

4. This religion is indeed *filia vocis* (as the Jews called their last kind of revelation), 'the daughter of a voice[s];' yet not of God's, but of their own. They thunder and rattle in the world, as if they would bring the heavens about our ears, and pour down the clouds upon us; but it is a tempest of their own raising, and a storm which their blustering passions and boisterous affections make in themselves. No whisper, nor thunder neither from heaven, makes men irreligious, proud, contemptuous, disobedient, bitter, cruel and full of black zeal. These are the breathings of the evil spirit, the belches of the bottomless pit. These inspirations smell of sulphur, they stink of fire and brimstone. The true religion leads a man to a solicitous inquiry after that which God hath revealed for the reforming of himself, and erecting the government of Christ in his soul. And the ruling over himself, keeping dominion over his lusts, is more desirable to him than reigning in pomp and state a thousand years upon the earth. The power of religion makes a man to know the certainty of those words of truth which lead him to the life of God, but never makes men talk like infallible prophets, what scene of things must next take its turn, and what piece of the Revelation must next come upon the stage. All these pretences to expounding revelations, and prophecies, and secrets of Providence may be but a fancy, and the liquorish desire that is in men to be meddling with them may be but such a thing as Eve's appetite to the tree, viz. the fruit of pride and curiosity. But the doctrine of Christ is plain, full and certain; and the desire in a man's soul after the knowledge of it, and being acquainted with it, must be the fruit of the good Spirit of God, which leads a man to the life and power of godliness, giving him a great command over himself and all worldly affections, making him to be good, not in word and notion, but in deed and truth.

5. But it is time to leave this sort of men, who are mere talkers of God, and who only give him their good word (as we ordinarily speak), commend him, and speak well of him, but care not to be so well acquainted with him as to be made like him: who compliment with him and speak him fair to his face, who pretend to friendship with him, and to be of his secrets and will be as near him as he pleaseth, so be it that he will not

[s] [Compare "Jesus and the Resurrection," part i. chap. 2. vol. ii. p. 374.]

make them good, nor work any alteration in their souls. Let me only annex to this another false religion very near of kin to it, which consists in a great outcry against antichrist and all his adherents. This word *antichrist* is of that nature that it may be pressed to serve any design, and it is become such a *Mormo* to vulgar people, that their hairs stand up an end, and they run away from the face of it as if they were out of their little wits. The more to blame they, who upon every occasion fright them with it, as unadvised people do their children with bugbears; which makes them of such a timorous nature, that they fear all things which they never saw before, though never so good and necessary for them. But in the ordinary sense of the word, people understand by it the pope of Rome, and imagine they are the friends of Christ because they hate his enemies; and that they are good protestants because they are against the papal encroachments. But many are beholden to their education for the planting this enmity in them, and it is too apt to degenerate into a poisonous and venomous weed of rancour and cruelty against the persons of those whose vices only we should hate. And others are taught by invective sermons against antichrist, which they happen to hear, to bear a great spleen against him, though they know not who he is: the natural seeds of piety which are in us towards a Deity, growing into this or that shape, according to the soil in which they are, the natural temper which men are of; and according to the manuring and husbandry that is used about them, the discourses which they ordinarily hear for the cherishing of piety.

6. And though all men of this spirit think they hate antichrist as they do the devil, and therefore judge themselves good Christians; yet if you look narrowly into them, you shall find that they have the very character of antichrist upon them, and the mark of the beast in their forehead, whereby we may know how far they are from true religion. For if you look into 2 Thess. ii., you shall find that the spirit of apostasy did not consist so much in ignorance, or merely in holding this or that speculative opinion, as in wickedness, pride, self-exaltation and tyranny. He that the apostle speaks of is called *the man of sin*, ver. 3, *the wicked one*, ver. 6, he that hath the *mystery of iniquity*, ver. 7, and *comes with all deceivableness of un-*

righteousness, i. e. with all fine devices to allure men to a fleshly life, ver. 10.

Let it be considered therefore how they brand themselves with the name of antichrist, who fiercely declaim against him, but live in sin, do unjustly, exalt themselves *above all that are called gods* in this world; love to domineer over others, are full of hatred and contempt of their betters; and in short, let them remember that it is no small note of him, that they count all antichristian but themselves. I shall conclude this with those words of the beloved apostle who wrote against such conceited people as justified themselves, though unrighteous, and condemned all others that were good. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother*[t].

CHAP. XXI.

1. *The Pharisees were much given to prayer.* 2. *Four instances of their zeal herein.* 3. *Notoriously wicked while thus devout.* 4. *Such there have been among Christians that much delighted in praying, though men very far from God.* 5. *Such there are still.* 6. *Yea, some that are but babblers and senseless zealots.* 7. *Some men's prayers are but an imitation of others'.* 8. *An active fancy contributes much to their gift, as they call it.* 9. *Natural conscience hath much to do in it.* 10. *A whining religion there is in the world, that doth nothing but complain of its defects.*

1. As there are some that please themselves with good speeches and warm discourses about God and holy things, so they are exalted to an higher degree of faith concerning his love to them, if they can but speak as confidently unto God as they can of him. In their prayers, I mean, they tell him such stories of their love to him, that they think he cannot but believe them. And they grow hereby into such a familiarity (as they

[t] 1 John iii. 7, 10.

take it) with him, that they doubt not but to have what they please of him, though they ask nothing less than heaven. Of this sort were the Pharisees; who were such great professors of religion among the Jews, that in the Talmudic language the word *Pharisee* signifies a pious and devout person[u]. And so St. Paul seems to have used it when he saith, that *according to the law he was a Pharisee*, i. e. one that gave himself to the strictest and nicest observation of what the law commanded. This was no small part of their holiness, whereby they begat an opinion in themselves of their saintship, that they were much given to pray, and often repaired to God's house, as if they had been most intimate friends of his. And when they were not there, they had other times of testifying their devotion to him, which they would not let slip, though they were in great crowds of people, or in the very streets: yea, to give a better example of piety, (as possibly they might think,) they would choose the very corners, where more might behold how careful they were to worship him.

2. And you may observe that (1) they did not only extend their prayers to a great length, which is some argument that they were pleased in this duty[x], but (2) some of them were ascetics, and for eight or ten years did nothing but pray, using (as Epiphanius tells us[y]) many sharp and rigorous courses to keep them from sleeping if they did but nod in the night, that so as much as was possible they might always be awake at their prayers. And (3) it should seem by our Saviour's speech that they imitated the heathenish custom (as an expression of their vehemency and loathness to be denied) of repeating the same words over and over again after a clamorous manner. For it is very likely that their voice did rise and grow louder every time that the word was reiterated, as if by their importunate crying they would force Heaven to hear them. Or (4) they used to draw out their words[z], and delighted in a dreaming kind of speaking: whereby they prolonged the sound unto an affected tone. For so some interpret those words Matt. vi. 7. of such a drawling way of delivering their words, as if their tongue

[u] Constant. L'Emper. not. in Benj. [Tudel.] Itin. p. 147. [8vo. Lugd. Bat. 1633.]

[x] Matt. xxiii. 14. Luke xx. 47.

[y] Vid. Hæres. xvi. [tom. i. p. 33.]

[z] Montac. in Apparat. [VII. p. 249.]

did not hang well, or had some clog upon it. And Theophylact notes that there is another word very near to that βατταλογία[a], which signifies such a noise as children make who cannot speak, but only scream and squeak, which may be also there intended.

3. But if you consider these demure and whining Pharisees a little better, you shall find that these good words were but to hallow and bless the next meal's meat that they intended to make of a widow's house. All this cry unto God was but their gapings for a poor orphan whom they meant to swallow. God, they thought, could not but give leave to such good men as they to please themselves a little, seeing they laboured to please him so much. They doubted not but he would say Amen to all their desires, as they did to their prayers. He could not but be glad (they might think) that such good friends of his grew rich on any fashion, seeing he was not like to lose, but to get by it. For if you look into Matt. xxiii. you cannot but observe that they were monstrous extortioners, and as full of covetous desires as a drunkard's cup is full of drink. Besides, they were abominably proud, undervaluing all men in compare with themselves. And so many ways also they had of disannulling all God's commands, as if by their prayers they had obtained a power from God to wipe and cross what they pleased out of his law. They took God to be so much beholden to them for their pains and sweat in praying to him, that they thought he was bound to let them make themselves an amends some other ways. And because it cost them much to be so devout, they thought their labour was as precious with him, and that he put the same value upon it. In short, so little there was in all this devotion, that if a man had had a mind to deny himself in little or nothing, his best way had been to have put himself into the garb of a Pharisee, and buy a grant of God to do what he list by his many prayers. Which was just as if a man should think by giving his neighbour many good-morrows, to make him overlook the breaking of his hedges, and the stealing of his goods: as if a man should beseech another not to be offended with him, though he beat his children, and took upon him to do what he listed in his house.

4. And such there have been in the Christian world, who

[a] Βατταρισμός. [in loc. tom. i. p. 31 D.]

have delighted in praying and offering up continual petitions to Heaven; whom the earth could not bear, because of their vile and wicked lives. As John Basilides, duke of Muscovy, whom Dr. Casaubon [b] instances in, who loved to be continually upon his knees, and lifting up his hands to God, when they were not employed in some butcherous and bloody action on others. And Hacket here in England, in the days of queen Elizabeth, of whom Saravia saith that he seemed to have a divine heat in him when he prayed [c]; though it is known to all the world with what wild fires he was acted. For there is a natural ardour may do much this way (as that doctor speaks), or rather a religious melancholy, as Dr. More hath shown in his excellent treatise of Enthusiasm [d]. For that humour will work and boil up even to an ecstasy, and where it meets with some spice of religion, it may do strange feats by way of devotion. Ignatius, the Jesuits tell us, was sometimes lifted up four cubits above the ground where he was at prayer [e]; and he might possibly seem to himself so to be, if that be true which Eunapius reports of Jamblichus [f], how that when he was a praying, he was heaved up from the earth πλέον ἢ δέκα πήχεις 'above ten cubits,' and his raiment seemed to shine with a brightness like to gold. But above all I desire the reader to take notice of what Theodoret saith of the *Messaliani* in prayers, that they used to do nothing else, and would not follow any calling, but when they did not pray, they fell asleep [g]. And then they thought that they beheld visions, and could prophesy, and saw the sacred Trinity with their eyes. They said that there was an evil spirit in all men which must be cast out by prayers, and then the Holy Spirit of God comes in; after which there was no need of fasting for to humble the body, nor of any doctrine or teaching which bridles and guides the motion of the body, but the Spirit doth all. One egg is not

[b] ["A treatise concerning Enthusiasme, as it is an effect of Nature; but is mistaken by many for either diabolical inspiration or diabolical possession; by Meric Casaubon, D. D." chap. 6. p. 214. 8vo. Lond. 1655.]

[c] [Quoted by Casaubon, ibid.]

[d] ["Enthusiasmus triumphatus; or a brief discourse of the nature, causes, kinds, and cure of Enthusiasm; by Henry More, D. D." sect. 16. p. 12. fol. Lond. 1712.]

[e] [Maffei, quoted by Casaubon, p. 216. The same marvel is repeated by Ribadeneira in his Flos Sanctorum, p. 542.]

[f] [pp. 13, 43.]

[g] L. iv. Eccles. Hist. cap. 10. [tom. iii. p. 964.] and L. iv. Hæret. Fab. cap. 11. [tom. iv. p. 366.]

more like another than those men were like them among us, who say they are above all ordinances. They feel some heat in their hearts when they pray, and they are lifted up in some kind of pious thoughts by the strong workings of their own melancholy fancies; and then they think that this is to them instead of all other things, so that the Lord's supper is but a carnal feast, and the Scriptures themselves are but dead letters; and ministers are but schoolmasters for children and fools.

5. So much of the Pharisee is still among us, that it would make any godly soul blush to see what foul things are done by those that make very fair pretences to God in their prayers. The measure of which many times is length and loudness, many words and much heat, whilst there is no true spiritual life and sense of God which breathes forth their souls unto him. Men care not to be as long in confessing of their sins as they intend to be in leaving of them, if it will but pass current for religion. They will pray for forgiveness of their sins as often as God pleases, so they may but have leave when they see occasion to commit them. They will call for that strength and power which they never mean to use, for that spirit of holiness which they would not have so kind as to come and trouble them in their enjoyments. They pray for that light which they would not have to look too broad in their faces, for that purity and sanctity which they will bestow no more upon than a prayer to obtain; and if they knew what they prayed for, they would be loath to have an answer. They beg that comfort, the spring of which they would be loath should dwell within them; that righteousness of Christ which they would have to cover all their filthiness and keep them warm in their sins; that blood of Jesus which should quench the fiery indignation which they say, but think not, that their sins do deserve.

6. And yet I have told you the best of this sort of religionists; for there are that think they shall be heard for their much babbling, and are little better than heathenish worshippers. They are rude and senseless in their tautologies without any real and unforced affection. Their prayers are a confused, indigested heap of words, rash and bold expressions; irreverent and unbecoming addresses to the glorious Majesty of heaven; fulsome and nauseating language, savouring of an unprepared though hasty, careless though confident mind. They are

measured by the glass, and must be stretched, though by heathenish repetitions, i. e. without any order or handsome zeal, to such a certain length. And if a childish tone, like that when they say their lessons, can help out these devotions, it is accounted a great token of good affection, and a sign that a man is more than ordinarily moved. If the voice likewise be loud and sonorous, most people are apt to think the heavens will hear those prayers sooner than others, as coming from the greatest zeal and fervency of spirit. But all good Christians, whose hearts are in their prayers, feel that the sense of God's glory, as well as his goodness, fills their souls. Which makes them modest and humble, blushing and bashful before his face; reverent and composed, solemn and sedate in their speech unto him; serious in their zeal and zealous in their repetitions; understanding in what they ask, and earnestly desirous to receive it. And above all, they know that an holy life is most pleasing unto God, whereby they do continually bespeak his favour, and are always sending up orators to the throne of grace to bring down more blessings upon them.

7. And if any one have a list to inquire into the bottom of this deceit, I believe he will find that many men's prayers are but a piece of art which they have learned by imitation of others, whose language and affection they most admired, from whom they have borrowed such feeling expressions as won their souls to some endeavours to be like them. I have sometimes thought that an hypocrite is rather a counterfeit of a Christian, than of Christ, for he doth not so much shape himself according to what he reads of him, as what he sees in them. He is but their ape, and never more discovers himself than when he labours to imitate their zeal, and to come up to the height of their piety. As apes are never more like themselves than when they do ἡρώων πρόσωπα περιθέσθαι (as Lucian somewhere speaks), 'put on the face and garb of noble men;' so the higher strains of devotion they endeavour to personate, the more their affectation and fulsome forcedness appears. Or as the deeper any women paint, the more plainly is their dissembled complexion seen; so the more colours these men lay on, and the greater ruddiness of zeal they would attain unto, the more is their ugliness revealed, and the false beauty of their holiness laid open to the world. As it is in those meteors

which they call *parhelia,* when two suns appear together besides the great light of heaven; the one, saith Seneca[c], is *simulacrum solis,* 'the picture or image of the sun;' the other is *simulacrum imaginis,* 'the picture or image of the image:' so it is in this case; a good man is the image of Christ the *Sun of righteousness,* but an hypocrite is only the image of the good man, not of Christ, having only a picture of his righteousness. And yet these pictures and images of Christians may seem to some to excel the copy, and be more admired than good and religious people. As a picture in a room is by art so drawn, that it seems to look upon every one in it, on whatsoever side you stand, whereas a living man doth look but one way; so these artificial pieces have a more notable way of looking graciously upon the multitude than real Christians have, who appear most lovely to those that have the Spirit of life ruling in them.

8. And if these artists have an active fancy and a natural heat, it will much promote their good opinion of themselves, because their devotions will be beyond the vulgar strain. For a quick fancy can administer very apt words and fluent expressions, that shall not jostle one against another, but run off very smoothly: and there is a kind of charm in dainty words well put together, which roll off the tongue without any rub in their way. The natural heat also, when it makes the animal spirits boil and leap up to a great height, can produce some affections and passions answerable to that freedom of language, which will have still more of ravishment and transportation in it. By the power of imagination likewise being thus heated and chafed, unusual thoughts may be raised up, and the mind may be filled with new notions, which men may take to be an argument of their being under the power of the Spirit; and their praying without a form may seem to them to be a token of the power of godliness. But when this heat abates, and they cease to be tickled with such affections, then these men grow pitiful creatures, and have no religion at all, unless they can comfort themselves with what they hear others also talk of, that they are under desertion, and make this as much a sign of grace as they did their former enlargements.

9. It must likewise be considered, that the beginning and continuance of this devotion is to be imputed to the natural

[c] Cap. 13. Nat. Quæst. [lib. i.]

conscience which men have of some duty owing unto God, and of some recompense that they stand bound to make him for their neglects of it. Though this conscience, when it is once awakened, cannot be satisfied unless they do something to please him, yet it rests commonly in that which is easy, and agrees best with their natural dispositions, and least contradicts their inbred lusts and desires. Now where there is that nimble fancy which I spoke of, and that voluble tongue, and spirits that can soon take fire by any motion, there is nothing more accommodated to the end of giving them satisfaction than prayer: because such people are naturally forward to talk, and can both with ease and pleasure make long speeches unto God. And when they have prayed themselves into a good opinion of their holiness and favour with God, then, as soon as their morning devotions are past, they may securely lie all day long in hatred, malice, covetousness, injustice, and such like sins, as though they had consecrated and craved a blessing upon all their actions. And so Mountaigne tells us[d], that there was a young prince, who, when he went about any lewd and unchaste design, would always go into that church which was in his way both as he went and as he returned from his filthiness; and this was told him by a great person as an instance of special and singular devotion. But let any impartial man tell me (saith he) to what purpose he invoked and called on God for his divine favour, having his mind wholly bent to sin, and his thoughts set on lasciviousness. And yet thus it is every man calls upon God, it matters not for what; the covetous, the ambitious, the thief, all pray God to succeed their enterprises; which is just as if a cutpurse should call in justice for his aid, and as if we should call God to witness to a lie. And there he adds this golden saying; "Verily it seemeth that we make no other use of our prayers, than of a company of gibberish phrases, or as those that employ holy and sacred words about witchcraft and magical effects; and that we imagine their effect dependeth on the contexture, or sound or succession of words, or on our countenance. For man's soul being full fraught with lusts, and nothing touched with repentance, they headlong

[d] Lib. i. Essays, chap. 56. [Montagne himself derived the story from the Heptameron of Marguérite de Valois, queen of Navarre; see Journée iii. 25; or Novel 5. p. 223 of the English translation by R. Codrington. 8vo. Lond. 1654.]

present unto him those heedless words that memory affordeth their tongue, by which they hope to obtain an expiation of all their offences."

10. I shall hereunto annex briefly another way of deceiving men's selves, which is by a whining, puling kind of religion, that many have taken up, (I must desire the reader to bear with such expressions, because I know not how to describe this form of cozenage better,) who are always complaining of their corruptions, their deadness in duties, that they cannot profit by sermons, nor find themselves enlarged in prayer, and such like things. I speak not now of the sober complaints which a good soul may make upon some occasion, but of a constant way and life of some people, who for many years are in the same doleful and querulous tone; exercising a continual peddling trade of going from house to house to tell their stories. And as you may observe that it is an ease to some melancholy people to be relating their griefs and aches, and to shed tears when their neighbours come in, for every little thing that troubles them; so I believe that these persons take some pleasure in their whining, and it is apt to stir in them some passion, which they look upon as a sign of grace, and a mark at least of that humility which the Scripture so much calls for. Especially if they bemoan their hypocrisy and falseness of heart, they are ready to think that they have a great deal of sincerity; whereas it is too true that they are as rotten as they say, because they do not grow better, nor make any progress from this whimpering childish condition to a state of man-like piety. It is not sufficient to make us good, to tell God and man that we are bad: and to sigh over ourselves makes our case worse, if it do not make us better.

CHAP. XXII.

1. *Pharisee signifies separated.* 2. *A great deal of deceit lies in separating of men's selves from others.* 3. *Zeal to promote an opinion is oft taken for religion.* 4. *This is a thing very delightful to the flesh.* 5. *Opposition to the bad party was a thing that puffed up the Pharisee.* 6. *And deludes still many carnal protestants.* 7. *Fasting and many little austerities they took for piety.* 8. *Such little*

strictnesses still pass among us under a great name. 9. *Of commending good men, and discommending all those vanities.* 10. *We must judge of men by what they do contrary to themselves.*

1. FROM this piece of false religion which I have noted in the Pharisee, I shall come to some other which our Saviour observes in the same chapter[e] where he speaks of this. And the first that we meet withal is their separating of themselves from all others, which is the very import of the word *Pharisee*, (as the most learned conclude,) which signifies one separated. And this they did, not only by taking upon them more ceremonious observances than others, and by abhorring common company, but also by their garments, their outward garb and deportment. They wore long robes, they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the fringes of their garments, which were characteristical notes to distinguish them from others. But there was a strange pride and love to be esteemed by others, and impatience of being despised and undervalued, that discovered itself in all their actions. For they affected the chief place at feasts, and would not endure a profane man to take the wall of them, and loved to be adored as great rabbies, and received all the honour that was put upon them as their due deserts.

2. It is to be feared that many at this day take themselves upon no better account to be good, but because they are not among the bad: and that others think themselves the most excellent Christians, because they are separated and divided from those that do not take themselves so to be. When men are once embodied in distinct societies, and are, though not cloistered, yet gathered from the rest of the world, they take this small strictness to be the *separation* (which the apostle speaks of) *from the unclean*, and the *coming out from among the wicked*. Whereas the heart of many such (for I speak not of all) is still among the crowd of the ungodly, their affections are as dirty, their passions as dark and black as theirs that lie still in the open streets, and are not thus enclosed from others. For whence else is it that they take themselves to deserve all places of preferment, and to be employed in the greatest

[e] Matt. xxiii.

affairs, and resent it very ill if their piety be not most made of by those that are in place of power and authority? Do they not scramble for the world as well as their neighbours? Are they not proud and supercilious? Do they not look down from their perch with a disdain of their brethren? If not, then are they happily separated by these good qualities from the world; but if they do, it is not their association with the good, nor the living in a fraternity, that will impale them from the herd of brutish men. If these fruits of the flesh be found in any company of men, high contempt and scorn of others, a spirit of contradiction, rebellion and sedition, unnatural affection, injustice and cruelty, hatred and envy, unmercifulness and hard-heartedness to the poor, rigour and sternness to those that dissent from them and are of another mind; they must be content to be told that their religion is but vain, and will vanish away: its root shall be rottenness, and its blossom shall go up as the dust.

3. A second thing that we meet withal as notorious among those Pharisees was a zeal to promote and spread their own opinion; which no question many take to be an argument of great love to God, who is more, they think, concerned in it than themselves. And this discovered itself in two things, 1. in their wonderful diligence that they used to make but one proselyte[f]. They would go a whole country over, yea and take ship also, to fish for but one disciple to their belief. Theirs I say, for they did not make them religious, but only brought them over to their party: they did not labour so much their conversion, as to maintain and support their own faction. And if he was not a hater of others before, they made him *twofold more the child of the devil than themselves,* full of all hatred, spite, and cruelty against those that were not of their gang. And that indeed was the second thing wherein their false zeal appeared; a strange fierceness against all of a different sense, so that they would not endure there should be any other persuasion, but anathematized all those that were not of their way[g]. If any man spoke well of our Saviour, and confessed him to be the Christ, they cast him out of the synagogue; and if he were a noted man, they sought to destroy him, and cast him out of the world, as they thought to do La-

[f] Ver. 15. [g] Ver. 13.

zarus. And especially take notice of what was said a little before, that the proselytes who were converted by them, and received the Jewish spirit, were the most bitter fellows of all; as they commonly among us who are scholars to a deluder are far more violent (for a proof, I think, either of their sincerity or proficiency) than the master of whom they learn their lessons.

4. So easy a thing it is to endeavour to destroy others, when we think that will save ourselves; and so glad is hatred of such an opportunity to vent all its fury without any fear of a reproof, but with great commendations for its pains. And so well content likewise will men's false hearts be to labour rather to make others of their mind, than to make them good; to make their neighbours like to themselves, than to make themselves like to God. There is some labour and difficulty in destroying the old man, and in graving the face of God upon our souls in righteousness and true holiness; but to stamp our own image upon other men's minds, and to beget children to ourselves, is a thing to which nature is prone, and wonderfully tickled in the doing of it. To walk with God undefiled in the way requires great caution, watchfulness, and circumspection; but it is no such hard thing as men imagine to walk over a whole country, and tell them that they are damned; that they must be baptized again, that they must forsake the church, and bid defiance to all priests, with things of the like nature. There is as much carnality and sensual pleasure in these things, as there is in the most lascivious actions of fleshly men. They are inflamed with their opinions, as Judah was with idols: they have an itching desire to be pouring out their conceits into the womb of every soul that will receive them. Let all men therefore take heed how they judge themselves godly, because they are hot and ardent in their desires to have all of their way; for this may be but self-love, or a tyrannous desire to have all wills humbled and bowed down to theirs.

5. To this we will subjoin a third thing, because very nearly allied with the former, and that was their opposition to the bad party. This discourse of our Saviour's in Matt. xxiii. is occasioned by the flocking of the Pharisees to him, who were mighty glad that he had put the dull Sadducees to silence[h].

[h] Matt. xxii. 34, 41.

A great abhorrence they had of those Epicurean principles which the Sadducees held, and did strenuously maintain a future state, and the resurrection of the dead, from whence they did conclude their zeal for God was as great as it was against the ungodly. And indeed in this did consist a great part of the Jewish hypocrisy: they had been soundly plagued for their idolatry and sabbath-breaking; and therefore they studied at last to get as far off from the Gentiles as they could, which they took for a mark of great reformation. So you may observe throughout the whole New Testament that they would not eat with a Gentile, and they abhorred idols; they were ready to kill our Saviour because he did works of mercy on their sabbath. And it is held unlawful by their doctors but to stoop down to drink of the water that flows from a statue, lest they should fall into the suspicion of worshipping before an idol. And so for the sabbath they were so exact, that they tell us the lamb of the passover which used at other times to be hung upon a staff or bar which lay on two men's shoulders, and so flead as it hung between them, (there being more at that time offered than could be flead in the court,) if the passover fell on the sabbath, then a man laid his hand upon his fellow's shoulder, and his fellow laid his hand on his, and upon their arms the lamb was hanged and flead by another neighbour, because it was not lawful that day to carry a burden[i]. Jeremiah, you know, threatens them (chap. xvii.) for carrying burdens on the sabbath-day, and therefore they were so fearful of it, that they would not venture so much as to lay a staff upon their shoulders, which would have weighed no more than their hands.

6. Would not you have taken these men for very pious and tender souls, who were so wary lest they should offend God, and bare such an hatred to all parties that were irreligious? Yes, sure, they would have passed for men of singular devotion in these days; and if they were alive among us, men would take up the old saying, that if but two persons should go to heaven, the one should be a scribe and the other a Pharisee. And yet alas! these men, who abhorred idols so much had a great abominable image of the world in their hearts, and

[i] [Gemara Hierosol. de Paschate, cap. 5. § 9. apud Ugolin. Thesaur. Antiq. Sacr. tom. xvii. et col. 792.]

mammon they daily adored. They hated the Sadducees more than they did their opinion; and they remembered the keeping of the sabbath so well, that they broke the very next command to it, and honoured their father and mother no more than they pleased. The carnal, worldly protestant is just their ape; he cannot endure the sight of a cross; he is ready to tear the picture of a saint in pieces; but he himself is only a picture of real saints; a mere statue, and as cold as a stone to all Christian virtues. He loves the sin of domineering over his brethren; of dictating from an infallible spirit; of heaping up riches, and enlarging his possessions as much as his life, which perhaps he is ready to sacrifice for the subduing of God's enemies. For so it sometimes is, that this opposition to a bad party is accompanied with such a notable hot zeal, that makes men willing to die in the quarrel: but this zeal is very black and sooty, and it sends up such a reek as miserably fouls the soul.

7. Before I come to that thing which I shall chiefly mark in Matt. xxiii., you may note some colder formalities and more beggarly ceremonies than these I have mentioned, which are spoken of in other places, and made a shift to creep under the name of religion in the world. They fasted very often, and made it known to all the neighbourhood by covering and hooding of their faces, as they used to do in time of mourning, Matt. vi. 10. They thought themselves defiled by the vulgar, the people of the earth, and would marvel (as the evangelist tells us, Mark vii.) if a man did not wash when he came to eat, or when he came from the market. They might wear perhaps rough garments, as the prophets did, (such hairy cloths as Elias and John Baptist used,) in token of a coarse, hard, and severe life, as a sign of great mortification, but it was only to deceive (as the prophet Zachary speaks, chap. xiii. 4,) and that they might make a prey of simple and well-meaning people. Abundance of villainy lurked under their hoods, and their hands, which they washed, were full of blood and covetousness.

8. I will not say what knavery lies under a friar's frock, nor what wickedness is cloistered from the eye of the world, under pretence of religion, because I am not acquainted with their practices, but only by report; but let us look at home, and see

if we can find none of this course harden religion[i], which consists altogether in corporal austerities[j]. Some we have seen making as much ado about such a cut of their hair as those friars about a shaven crown; and as fierce for the cutting off their ribbons as if it was the cutting off our right hand, which our Saviour speaks of. And others we have seen to fast, and punish their bodies, and make them do penance by an hard life, who notwithstanding have been hard to the poor, and harsh and sour to others as well as to themselves. They look upon these things as great marks of humility; but as David Chytræus well saith, (with whose words none will be offended, though they may with mine,) *Forma humilitatis est, non dejectio capitis in alterum latus, non vestis sordida*[k], &c. 'Humility doth not consist in holding one's head awry, in wearing of poor clothes, or any other external gesture; but in the hearty casting down of ourselves before God, and subjecting our wills to his, to do and suffer what he pleases.'

9. They commended likewise good men, but especially those that were dead and gone, garnishing the very sepulchres of the prophets. And not a small piece of religion is it nowadays, to commend the preacher as the woman did our Saviour, saying, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee*[l], &c. "O he is a precious man, a sweet teacher, I could hang on his lips all day long;" though they are no wiser nor better by all the sermons they hear, than they were many years ago. To throng to the church, to use devout carriage there, demure looks, sad sighs and groans, a sour face, a studied tone, a deliberate gait, will go a great way in many men's religion. And on the contrary, there are some who pride themselves in decrying all these poor formalities which we have named, in scuffling and fighting with these shadows of religion; dealing more blows at these airy appearances than at foul and deadly sins. Both of these men are of the same genius, accommodating themselves to the mode and fashion of the times; imitating, as far as they dare with safety to their sins, those who are taken to be truly religious. They would wear the clothes, but not be the men: they would fain have these things to be putting on of Jesus Christ, but like not a religion that will lie near the heart, and make them

[i] [Qu. 'coarse hardened religion?']
[j] ['austeries,' edd.]
[k] Reg. Vitæ. [p. 63.]
[l] Luke xi. 27.

put off themselves. And indeed when I have considered all things, I find that there is nothing so poor and mean about which men may not spend their zeal so excessively that it may pass with them for a religion. They would have the *kissing of the Son*, spoken of Psalm ii. 12, to be but such a ceremony as the kissing of the hand was among the heathen when they worshipped. Bowing and kneeling unto the Lord our Maker[m], they can easily think to be no more than bending their hams, bowing their bodies before him; praying and lifting up the soul to God, to be but turning up the eyes, and lifting up the hands; purifying and cleansing to be nothing else but outward baptism: and receiving of Christ to be eating and drinking of the bread and wine in the Lord's supper; and all the great duties of a Christian to be fulfilled in a good will to them, which God will accept instead of the deed.

10. We must learn therefore not to judge of men by their talk and brave expressions, by their little strictnesses and trifling zeal, or any thing that is cheap and easy; but by their self-denial and abasing of themselves, and by all real acts of righteousness which are chargeable and cost them something. As they say that at Venice they will give you the title of *magnifico*, and solemnly invite you to their houses to dinner; but if you accept of the invitation, and expect what they profess, it is a piece of the greatest rudeness, incivility and ill-breeding; even so it is here: there are many men that speak honourably of God, and seem to be very desirous of his company, and invite him to their souls by many prayers and earnest petitions that promise him fair, and profess great respect to him; but he is ignorant and rude in the world who expects they will be as good as their word, and they themselves take it very ill that God should require all that at their hand. They love to talk of remission and reconciliation, the flowing forth of Christ's blood, the bleeding his heart to sinners, the freeness of his grace, and twenty such good words and phrases. They will chat all day long of fulness and freeness, of riches and kindness, communion and communication, and such like things; but you must not think that they mean any thing more than Christ's casting a covering over their sins, and hiding their iniquities. Christ must speak as much of their kindness

[m] Psalm xcv.

and love also if they be holy, for they see no obligation to such exactness: and therefore all they bestow on God is large promises, and some petty inconsiderable actions of obedience. If he will have more, he must take it of Christ and not of them, for he is best able to pay what is owing. Though they are engaged and stand bound to God in many duties, yet they intended in conclusion to cast the whole debt upon Christ, and to discharge little or none of it themselves.

11. And I cannot but admire at the strange impudence of the world, who ordinarily brand the ministers with the name of Scribes and Pharisees, because they wear long cloaks, or have respect and honour from the people which they do not seek; though they be men of upright lives, and whose hands were never fouled with any dishonest gain, but stretched out many times to relieve those that are in need; and yet never consider how like they themselves are to those persons in their covetousness, hard heartedness, hatred, desperate malice, implacableness against all that oppose them, and other things of this high nature. All that bear any similitude to their outward garb must be hypocrites, and they that resemble them in their diabolical nature must be saints. Who can help it if men will be mad and consider nothing? They themselves perhaps *make long prayers*, as the Pharisees did, and yet they would be loath (and so would I also) that therefore they should be esteemed hypocrites; if all things else were correspondent, and their lives were holy. They might learn, then one would think, (if they be not quite frantic,) that the hypocrisy of the Pharisees did not consist in wearing long robes, or any such outward thing; but in placing their religion in them, and living under that shadow in all covetousness, pride, lordliness over their brethren, spite, anger and desire to destroy all contrary minded, and such like wickedness. If men be guilty of these things, then they are Pharisees in grain, though they wear short cloaks, and are so called masters.

CHAP. XXIII.

1. *The Pharisees great zealots for some things, but neglecters of others; and for their own traditions more than God's commands.* 2. *They loved acts of piety better than acts of mercy and justice; and those acts of piety that were outward, more than the inward.* 3. *That which agreed with their humour, better than that which was against it.* 4. *More scrupulous of a little sin than a great.* 5. *Just in one case, that they might be unjust in many; and sometimes charitable, that they might be constant extortioners.* 6. *They would do more than was commanded in one thing, rather than what was commanded in all things.* 7. *Great need therefore we should examine ourselves. Observe well what moves you when extraordinary zealots for one thing.* 8. *Observe what your zeal in one case is apt to make you neglect in others.*

1. And this will lead me to the great mark of the Pharasaic spirit, which comprehends all the rest; and that is a fierce zeal for some things, with a plain neglect of all the rest. As it is easier to talk than to do, so some things are easier to be done than others. And if you read the gospel, you will see that they picked out those things that were of easy digestion and would nourish their diseases, but rejected every thing that might make them sick and vomit up all their filthiness. To make this more apparent, I will instance in some particulars which clearly discover their partial and unequal zeal in performance of their duty. And first, you may observe that they loved their own traditions better than they did God's express commands. There are many learned men (and St. Hierom among the rest) that think God did not command them to make phylacteries, but only carefully to remember the law[n]. And yet they were more careful to have these scripts of parchment about them, than to have the law of God written on their hearts, which was contained in them. But though that be not certain, yet it is most indubitable that God commanded them to honour their father and mother, but nowhere bids them offer and consecrate all their estates to him[o]. And yet notwithstanding they took

[n] Deut. vi. 8, 9. [o] So Theophylact interprets it. [in loc. tom. i. p. 78.]

themselves to be excused from all obligations to relieve their poor parents, if they could but say, that they had devoted all that as a gift to God whereby they might do them any good[p]; which was a most senseless thing, and as if what was given to the poor, especially to our parents, were not given to God's uses. And yet now at this day, men are wont to swagger more in a new fashion and late invention in religion of their own contriving, than to contend earnestly for the manifest precepts of our Lord Jesus. They are all on a fire for a doubtful opinion, for a mode of government which relies on no clear Scripture: but have scarce any sensible heat for that love and charity which Christ hath undeniably commended over and over again to his disciples.

2. A second thing which you may observe in the Pharisee is this, that they loved actions of devotion to God better than actions of mercy and equity to men. That you may see by their *long prayers*[q], and their *corbans*, or gifts they offered to God, just now mentioned. There was more of pomp and fame, but less of self-denial, in the one than in the other; and they would always choose that which was most easy, especially if it conduced to their credit and glory. And therefore, thirdly, you may observe, that of all actions of piety, they chose those that were most outward, and done with least trouble: as to praying they were much addicted; but with meditation, inward admirations of God, and adorations of his excellencies, we may be sure they were little acquainted. And just so now it is, men think that actions of piety merit more of God than others do, and that he is so pleased with them, that he can be content if they overlook others, while they are so very kind to him, and therefore mercy and kindness to others are mere strangers to them. And you may observe, that men had rather pray with others than alone by themselves; and they account it a greater attainment to be a speaker in a congregation, than to be humble and lowly hearted. They are strangers to inward and deep thoughts of God; for if they were acquainted with his holiness and goodness, they would mind nothing more than to purge themselves from all their filthy passions and affections, and to do good to all as he doth.

[p] Matt. xv. 5.

[q] Matt. xxiii. 14.

3. And indeed, fourthly, it was generally true of them, that they loved that which was outward more than that which was inward[r]. And they loved that which agreed with their own humour better than that which was against it[s]. They scoured the outside, that it might shine and glister, and dazzle all men's eyes with its brightness; but they cared not how black or cankered they were within, and how vile they appeared in God's eyes, so that all their neighbours would suspect no foulness. And they endeavoured the conversion of others to their religion, which did but feed their own vain humour and popular desire of being accounted great and glorious saints; while they took no care to turn their own hearts to God and true righteousness, from which they had so monstrously degenerated. Of this sort are all they who are highly zealous against all carnal sins, but live in those that are spiritual. They hate all riot and drunkenness, (as we all ought to do,) but are drunken themselves with rage, anger, and pride. They reprove others sharply, but cannot endure a fair reproof from others. They cry out perhaps against injustice, but think it no robbery to take away a man's good name. They detest unclean embraces, but yet have an unchaste complacency in themselves and their own opinions. They would have no wicked men govern us, but they think themselves fit for their places, and are desirous of preeminence.

4. A fifth token of their hypocrisy was, that they were more scrupulous in committing of a little sin than of a great. They would take false witness against Christ, though they would not enter into the governor's hall for fear of being defiled: which was as if one should strain his liquor if there were a gnat in it, but making nothing of swallowing a camel[t]. The heat and sap of their souls spent themselves in such broad leaves and fruitless suckers as you see in a vine undressed: and he that should but pluck off one leaf, strike off one ceremony or uncommanded duty that they imposed, was a greater enemy to God in their account than he that broke most of God's laws. He that knows the world cannot but see that this leaven is not yet cast out of men's hearts. We have many that are Christians, just as Domitian was a soldier; that are enemies to

[r] Matt. xxiii. 25, 28. [s] Ver. 15. [t] xxiii. 24.

flies, and flies to their enemies: very braving and daring they are against that which is called superstition, but easily yielding to temptations to covetousness, deceit, and unlawful gain: or, on the contrary, very fearful to fail in a ceremony, but worshipping the flesh and living loosely. An hypocrite is much employed in little things, and busied about the shadow and bark of religion, be it what it will. If religion be pompously and gloriously clothed, then he will strive to be most ceremonious, costly, and chargeable in his devotion: so that we may say of him as the philosopher said of a finical but empty lawyer, *homo in causis agendis bene vestitus,* 'a neat man in his religion, one that pleads with God in gorgeous apparel.' But, on the contrary, if men take to a side that loves to be sordid and slovenly, and as careless as they can in all outward decencies, none shall more fiercely decry all ceremonies, nor more profane all that was before accounted holy. And so in all other matters, the most inconsiderable among them exercise their zeal, and the weightiest exercise only their fancies and tongues.

5. A fifth thing to be noted in them is, that they would be just in one thing that they might be unjust in another. They would pay their tithes to the priests, that this might cover all their acts of rapine and covetousness among the people[u]. And they did not only pay them, but were very scrupulous to pay them exactly, as if they would not wrong one of a cumminseed, or a spear of mint, or, as we say, of the hair of one's head; whenas they neglected judgment, if any causes came before them, they showed no mercy to the poor, and kept no faith in their covenants and promises. It concerns a man to be very punctual with some persons, and in his ordinary intercourse to keep to rules of justice; else he would be hissed out of the world, and he would have no opportunity to deceive a simple or unwary soul. Much less would he be able when he stretches his conscience to do a base action, to take himself still for a godly man, if he did not at other times deal fairly. And therefore he is fain also to imitate the Pharisee in a seventh quality, and that is, to do some great act of charity, to excuse himself from a constant exercise of it. It is like that these

[u] Matt. xxiii. 23.

hypocrites which our Saviour speaks of paid the tithe which was due every third year for the use of them that were in need[x], as well as the yearly dues to the ministers of God in the temple. And this great and expensive charity they thought perhaps so highly of, that they never reproved themselves for their miserable and wretched covetousness at all other times: as many men now, whose fingers are very stiff, may chance to draw their purse-strings at some solemn time, or when they are much moved with a good sermon of alms-doing; who at other seasons have hearts as hard as flints to the crying necessities of their brethren. Much of the religion of men and their charity also knows its times and days; if they be observed, God lends them (they think) the rest of their lives to dispose of as they please themselves.

6. And, lastly, they would not stick to do more than they were commanded, that they might neglect God's express commands. For many think that the tithe of every herb (which they paid[y]) was not due by the law: but they could be content to over-do in this case, that they might do nothing in others; to give these free-will offerings, that they might have their own wills in greater matters. So false is the heart of men, that they think an excess in what pleases them will satisfy for all their defects in that which is most pleasing unto God: as to keep whole days of prayer is far more grateful to some than to keep a continual watch over themselves in all their dealings and converses with others, and in all their own inward thoughts and desires. They will leave no stone unturned to find out an art or device to save themselves from the trouble of mortification and self-denial. They will wriggle every way rather than be straight and upright as God made them. Any labour or pains they will take to shift off the great commandments of *loving God with all their hearts, and souls, and strength, and loving their neighbours as themselves.*

7. The more need there is that men should be earnestly urged to search into their hearts, and examine them well about these things, lest there lie hid any of this leaven under many seeming actions of godliness. Take heed lest you wink at some evil affection which you bear a particular respect unto, and let

[x] Deut. xiv. 28. [y] Luke xi. 42.

it escape untouched when you profess to cleanse yourselves. Beware lest you cast only a favourable look upon some duties of religion, and look asquint upon the rest, or take no notice of them. Labour to remove all obstructions, that zeal may have a free passage through the whole frame of your souls, and that you may be equally spirited to every duty of religion. And I shall commend these two things as of singular use and advantage to keep our hearts from self-deceit. First, let men suspect themselves when they are moved with an extraordinary heat, and feel a great zeal agitating of them in some one thing which they undertake upon the account of religion. Let them presently begin to ask themselves how they stand affected to all the rest, and to feel how their pulse beats in all things, especially in the most spiritual actions: or else it is a thousand to one that this zeal will betray them into hypocrisy, and they will place all their religion in it. And therefore search well, if there be not some external inducement which thou dost not observe, some corrupt end at the bottom, some willingness to spare a foul and nasty desire, which makes thee so zealous in that particular thing, which may be as a covering for thy coldness in other matters. Be not cheated by thyself into a belief that thou art religious, when thou bearest not a love to all God's commandments; but labour impartially and conscientiously to carry thyself to every duty alike, and then thou mayest be well persuaded of thy sincerity in religion.

8. And, secondly, let every man observe what it is that he is most in danger to neglect when his spirit is forwardly carried towards one thing. There is always some one duty more than others that a partial zeal is apt to devour. Be sure therefore to *take heed, and beware of covetousness*, while you cry out against profaneness. Be as careful to maintain love in your heart to your brethren, as you are to observe them, reprove them, or to make them of your mind. Be as humble, lowly, and poor in spirit, as you are ready to distribute, to relieve the poor, or despise the world. Labour to be in as great charity with your enemies, to love them, pray for them, and bless them, as you are willing and perhaps forward to hazard yourselves in a good cause. Be as conscientious in following the minister's doctrine as in paying of him his tithes, and speaking well of him; as zealous in doing as you are in hearing; as

careful to use God's grace as to beg it; to live to God, as to pray to him. And St. James gives us the reason, that we shall otherwise *deceive our own souls*[z]. We shall have only so much religion as will serve to cozen ourselves: as many a man doth who hears God's word, and prays, and is much affected; but makes no conscience of laying it to his heart by serious consideration, and working of it into the frame of his spirit, that he may live according to it.

CHAP. XXIV.

1. *The distinctions which the Pharisees had to elude God's commands.* 2. *One more notable than the rest, that if they kept one precept well, they need not keep all others.* 3. *The fleshly Christian hath his juggling tricks; he distinguishes between the letter and the spirit of a duty.* 4. *Or saith he follows Providence.* 5. *Or that he hath an impulse.* 6. *Or he pleads necessity.* 7. *Or that he doth it for God's glory.* 8. *Or hath liberty from free grace.* 2. *Or from the examples of good men.* 10. *We must not believe every pretender.* 11. *Observe how they change and turn about.* 12. *Especially how loath they are to suffer, and how impatient under it.*

1. BUT you may well wonder how men so knowing as they were should overlook the most necessary things, which are so legible in the book of God, and persuade themselves that they were pious, notwithstanding such palpable neglects. Sure these men had a most notable wit, which could invent such cunning distinctions as should allow them to break all God's commandments while they seemed to keep them. And so they had, as our Saviour tells, Matt. xxiii. 16, 17, &c., where you may see that they did absolve men even from their oaths that were made by holy things, (viz. the temple and the altar,) if they were not made by that which they most loved, the gold and the gift. It is so senseless a distinction whereby they freed men who had solemnly sworn, (as our Saviour plainly proves to them,) that we cannot but think it was invented by

[z] James i. 22.

gross covetousness, and yet with a show of devotion to God in preferring the gold that was brought to his treasury, and the gifts to his altar, above all other things in sacredness. And so they defeated another command concerning the giving of honour to our parents, by making a vow that all they got should be as a sacred thing to their parents, i. e. it should be as unlawful for them to have any of their goods, as to enjoy that which was devoted to God. For so they that are best skilled in the Jewish learning do expound that place, Matt. xv. 5[a], though some of the fathers (as I have already said) think that it speaks of consecrating their goods to the treasury of God. This was a rare way to be rich, by vowing not so much as to give their parents a mite of their goods, and a great piece of religion no question they thought it to keep such a vow when they had made it. This was a subtle art to be covetous and under a religious tie both together.

2. But these are no more than trifles in compare with that transcendent trick which absolves a man at once from as many duties as he pleases: that rare device was this, that if a man observed but one command well, it was not absolutely necessary that he should keep the rest. So R. Chanania saith[b], that God would have Israel increase in merits, and therefore it was that he multiplied so many precepts. It was not absolutely necessary that they should observe them all; but they should merit exceedingly if they did: for so Maimon observes in his comment upon that place cited in the margin, "If any of Israel keep one of the six hundred and thirteen precepts as he ought, out of love, and without a mixture of worldly designs, he shall have a portion in the world to come." Many evasions will men's own lusts and desires suggest to them for the casting off the weight of any duty that lies upon them; but this is such a notorious gloss, that by it they might slip their necks from the yoke of every command but that which they could be content to practise.

3. And you must not think the fleshly Christian is at a loss for the like distinctions, interpretations and glosses, for to serve the dear interest of his sins. Loath he is to break a law, unless

[a] Vid. J. Coch, in duos tit. Talmud. cap. 7. Sanhedr. [§ 5. p. 273. 4to. Amst. 1629.]

[b] Vid. tit. Maccoth, cap. 3. [§ 16. ibid. p. 121.]

he seem to himself to keep it, and therefore here his wit steps in, and offers its help to salve his conscience, and his profit, or pleasure, both together. I shall take the liberty to instance in a few which are easy to observe, because I doubt men will make a shift to understand nothing that concerns them by all that I say, unless I descend to particulars. First, therefore, if a man have use for a sin, as suppose the breaking of an oath, he can distinguish between the letter and the spirit of it: he can easily persuade himself that he keeps the prime meaning, (which is according as he pleases to have it,) though he go contrary to the sound of the words, and the sense in which men commonly understand it. And thus those persons in New England who made so great a disturbance, *an.* 1636[c], evacuated and blotted out the whole body of Christian precepts, and did not leave so much as the Pharisees, (who thought obedience to one precept at least to be necessary,) saying, that the letter of all the Scriptures were for a covenant of works; but the spirit of them held forth a covenant of free grace. This was a rare answer when they were urged with several places of holy writ that proved the necessity of sanctification and inward righteousness, which they turned out of doors under the pretence of letting in Christ. If it were said that we must become new creatures, the answer was ready, that by the new creature is meant Christ, and therefore we must only get into Christ. If it were said, we must be holy as God is holy, this was the return, that Christ is our sanctification, and that there is no inherent righteousness in us, but only in him. And whereas the Scripture saith, *Blessed are the poor in spirit,* &c. they said, a man might have all grace, and yet want Christ. This was the secret sense, the spirit of the Scriptures, that we need do nothing, and Christ hath done all. This was holding forth naked Christ, as they called it; so naked indeed, that it is a shame to speak of it.

4. If men cannot attain to this height of secret intelligence, (which the old Gnostics likewise boasted of,) but they must acknowledge that sense which we receive of God's precepts,

[c] See Mr. Weld's relation. ["A short story of the rise, reign, and ruine of the Antinomians, Familists, and Libertines, that infected the churches of New England; &c."—see errors 9, 20, 72, 77. pp. 2—15. 4to. Lond, 1644.]

then they have another little device to save them the labour of yielding obedience; and that is called *Providence*, which is able to justify any action against the authority of God's word. If they have something to accomplish which is contrary to law and justice, and their conscience boggles at it, then, because they have a mind to keep friends with God, if he be content with fair terms, they will entitle him some way or other to it, and they will not do it, except his providence lead them to it. And this hath been swallowed for very sweet doctrine by some grandees, (as I am well assured,) that "a man may follow Providence against a precept." And so a thief (I have oftentimes thought) who going by an house sees the door open, and a fair plate inviting of him, nobody within to deter him, may stand and admire at this strange providence, that he should come in that nick of time when all things concur together to justify his theft, to which he hath so loud a call. And if he should at that time be thinking of another thing, and this plate likewise should happen to have his name upon it, how should he choose but hold up his hands and say, that he was led to it by the hand of Heaven? I would have any one to tell himself how his case differs from this, who when a great many things usually meet together to make up a temptation (for it is nothing else) to draw him to do an unlawful action, he saith, that Providence hath so ordered it; he did not intend it, but that he hath a call. And truly, I believe he hath a call from his own importune and bawling desires; and Providence, I know, disposes of all things, and often sets us in such circumstances as we shall be tried how we will behave ourselves, and prove us how we will do our known duty.

5. But if this fail, there is a third thing so powerful that nothing can resist it, and that is a secret impulse and inward motion mistaken for inspiration. There is no act so guilty which this is not able to set a good face upon; no cause so foul which this cannot justify with a goodly pretence. The Zealots among the Jews covered abundance of murders and other insolencies under the name of such a divine spirit as moved Phineas. All the Jews had a tang of this fiery zeal, and therefore rush like madmen with their stones upon St. Paul and others, to vindicate their law from the contempt which they imagined was cast upon it. And so all men that are pricked

forward and spurred on by their own ambitious covetous desires, or their revengeful and angry passions, may easily think that they feel some foreign impulse, because they are thrust on by no small violence. Their own longings are wings large enough to mount up their soul, and carry them like an eagle to his prey. Their own desires can inspire them, and impregnate their sails without any other spirit to breathe upon them. There is so much fire naturally within them, that none need descend nor ascend to stimulate their souls to any beloved enterprise.

6. But if men be not of so high spirits as to have a touch of enthusiasm, there is a fourth thing called *necessity*, which hath no law. Tertullian[d] indeed was so simple as to say in the name of the old soldiers of Jesus Christ, that *nulla est necessitas peccandi, quibus una est necessitas non peccandi;* 'there can be no necessity of sinning, to them who have one necessity lying upon them of not sinning.' But there are blades now of a purer make and a sharper edge, who cut asunder those iron chains of necessity itself wherein those grosser souls were fettered. Though it be necessary for such as us (who follow the old steps) not to sin, yet it is necessary to them to sin; but they think it not to be a sin, because it is necessary. But they had best look to it, and consider who is the author of that necessity, and not, when they have run themselves into a strait, think that God gives them leave to break an hedge. Let them not think to escape better with all these pitiful shifts than a thief doth, who, when he hath robbed a man of his money, thinks it necessary for to make all sure to cut his throat. It is a necessity which he himself creates, and he must either make it good against the other of not sinning, which is of God's creating, or else it is necessary that he suffer soundly both for sinning and for making it necessary to sin.

7. And if it be said (as it must), that there is no necessity that they or any other men should be great, or rich, or live in the world, and therefore they should not do an illegal action for the saving of life itself; they have another distinction ready at hand, which is, that all is done for God's glory, and we are not always to tread in the ordinary path to accomplish

[d] In Apolog. ["Nulla est necessitas delinquendi, quibus una est necessitas non delinquendi,"—De Corona, cap. xi. p. 108 A.]

that. A man may step out of his way for Christ's sake; and he is mightily beholden (you may think) unto him, that he will sin even against his conscience for his honour. What can he do more for Christ than sacrifice his very soul, and damn himself to make him glorious? Sure Christ will catch hold on such loving friends of his, and not suffer them to fall into that damnation which they ventured at, seeing it was for him. Just as politicians when they do unwarrantable actions think to excuse them with the reason of state, and pretence of common good; so do other men think to shelter all their evil doings under the wings of Christ, and drown the voice of their impieties with loud cries, For the glory of God, for the glory of God. As those statesmen will break their faith and their oaths, and at the rate of their honesty purchase the common welfare; so do these men transgress all God's laws, and will pawn their very souls upon it, that all is done for the Divine honour. As if God had need of men's sin, or we could tell what is his interest better than himself. I am something angry at this vile abuse of his holy name; for I can make no better sense of men's actions than this: that though God hath told us what is his mind and pleasure, yet they will instruct him and teach him what is more for his benefit, and show him a way that he thought not on for the advancement of his glory.

8. But perhaps there is no such thing as sin in them; and we poor creatures know not the mystery of that great phrase *free grace*. There is a singular privilege (that we know not of) contained in those words to do evil. As if it was called *free grace* because it made them free from all law: or by an antiphrasis, because it makes them slaves to all their own lusts and worldly affections. And indeed it is very strange if God should be so free and liberal as to give away all his own rights, and let his creatures do even as they list. If men swallow once this conceit, they will not be so kind as to give him any thing back again. Witness the Manichees and the Borborites of old, who thought that sin did not hurt God's elect; but as gold thrust into the dirt still retained its nature and lustre, so they, though they rolled ἐν ὁποίαις ὑλικαῖς πράξεσι, 'in any kind of filthy and fleshly actions,' yet were not hurt at all, nor did ἀποβάλλειν τὴν πνευματικὴν ὑπόστασιν[e], 'lose their spiritual nature

[e] Irenæus. [Contr. Hæres. lib. i. cap. 6. tom. i. p. 29.]

or subsistence.' And witness the ranting crew among us, whom we may call, as the Jews do us sometimes in spite, not *Kedoshim*, but *Kedishim;* not *sancti*, but *cinœdi;* not *saints*, but *sinners*, in the worst use of the word. I cannot tell how true it is, but I have read it as a speech of some amongst us, that "God ofttimes saves his people even contrary to his own rules." I am sure the actions of many are so conformable to it, as if they fed upon nothing but such poisonous doctrine. And either God must act contrary to himself, as they do, and break his word in favour of base pretenders; or else such unrighteous, covetous persons, such extortioners, liars, &c. shall never enter into heaven.

9. But yet, as if heaven were full of none but such as they, I have known some have the impudence to justify bad actions by the examples of the saints' miscarriages, which are recorded in holy writ. Who methinks are just like to bad painters, who (as Plutarch observes) because they are not able by their skill to represent in their colours a beautiful face, ἐν ῥυτίσι καὶ φακοῖς καὶ οὐλαῖς τὰς ὁμοίοτητας ἀναφέρουσι[f], 'they draw the likeness of things in wrinkles, and scars, and wounds.' When men cannot imitate the good that is in those examples, they will pick out all the bad, and draw the copy of it in their lives. It is the fault of the world, that they carp at the failings of good men when they are alive, and take no notice of their piety and holiness: and yet they will imitate those failings when they are dead, and think to crust over all their sins by those examples which they would have railed at before. If vice be ugly, then it is most ill favoured in those who are good: and if these men were good, they would be of that judgment. And as the Lacedemonians brought their children to behold their slaves when they were drunk, not that they might learn of them, but that they might abhor that dirty and sottish sin[g]; so would these men look upon the sins of others, not to be like them and do the same, but the more to abominate and detest them which leave such a foul blemish upon them that commit them. And at the day of judgment they will be condemned, not only for sinning, but for falling into those sins which they had fair warning to watch against by the examples of others before them.

[f] De Discrim. Adul. et Am. [p. 53.]

[g] [Id. adv. Stoic. p. 1067.]

10. You must come near therefore to those that make a fair show, and examine their actions, before you believe all their excellent speeches and pious discourses about some matters in religion. If you stand at a distance from them, you would take them to be very glorious saints: they do so glitter in an outward profession, and perform such splendid works of devotion: but if you come near to them and handle them, you will find them hot without and cold within; full of fierceness and violence in their external motions, but void of all true love and goodness in their hearts. I have sometimes compared them in my own thoughts unto those Indian calicos, which when we behold afar off seem to be a rare needlework of all sorts of silk: but when we come close to them, are only thin painted stuff that hath neither substance nor cost in it. These men look like the king's daughter, whose garments were of needlework and wrought gold; whereby you would imagine that they were all glorious within also: but if you come to deal with them, you shall see by many of their actions, that this outward bravery is a mere varnish and gloss that they set upon themselves: some painted raiment to hide their nakedness, but which an observant eye may easily look through, it is so thin and beggarly.

11. Especially observe how many of them change with times and occasions, and say that they must follow Providence. If you follow them close, you will soon find that as their profit leads them, so they cry up particular pieces of godliness. Just like Alcibiades, who (as Plutarch[h] saith of a flatterer) at Athens was a gallant, and at Sparta wore a threadbare cloak; in Thracia was a warrior, and at Tissapherne[i] gave himself to pride and luxury: so do these men vary according as several humours stir within them. Sometimes they would have all God's people be no less than kings; and at other times they must be as poor as beggars. Sometimes they pine and macerate themselves with fasting; and again they think that none but they may make a free use of the creature. Many of them there are that will sail with every wind if it blow them any profit; and all of them are carried as the fierce gusts of their various passions do make a zealous bluster in them. But a

[h] De Discrim. Adul. et Amic. [p. 52.]
[i] [i. e. 'with Tissaphernes.']

good man who directs his life, not by his worldly interest or mutable fancies, but by the word of God, he always steers the same course, and remains constantly the same man, as that Word doth *whose righteousness is everlasting*. We may say of him as the same Plutarch doth of those brave men Epaminondas and Agesilaus[1], Προσῆκον ἦθος αὐτοῖς πανταχοῦ, 'they had every where a becoming deportment;' and as he saith of Plato, who was the same at Syracuse that he was in his academy, and before Dionysius such an one as he was before Dion. He changes not his behaviour with places and persons, for he *walks before God*, who is always the same and changes not.

12. And if any of these men we have been treating of be so hardy as to suffer for their opinion (for I can call it nothing else), and not alway cast to be on the thriving side, yet it is with a full bad will. And they are so far from bearing it meekly and patiently, that they struggle by all means to throw the cross from off their shoulders. If there be any way to ease themselves, they inquire not much whether it be good or bad, but are easily inclined to think that Providence makes an offer to them for their deliverance, though it be by unlawful means. Such as they would not have spared Saul, if they had been in David's case when he had him at his mercy, but they would have applauded Abishai for a saint, who said, *God hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand*, and bidden him smite him to the ground. And observe them also when they are uppermost again, whether they be not as zealous to lay the cross on other men's shoulders, as they were to cast it from off their own. As far as I can observe, it is the temper of this false zeal, wheresoever it is, to endure no oppression quietly, to endeavour alway to be above, to trample upon others, to be proud and disobedient, to contemn all authority which is not on their side, and to speak evil of dignities, if they do not speak well of them.

[1] De Discrim. Adul. et Amic. [p. 53.]

CHAP. XXV.

1. *The design of God is to make men thoroughly good.* 2. *Though men now think otherwise, yet the ancient Christians prove the divinity of their religion from the excellent lives of them that professed it.* 3. *They proved Christ's divinity likewise from the goodness of his followers.* 4. *They upbraid false Christians, that they could not confute heathens by their lives.* 5. *The definition of a Christian according to Phavorinus, who speaks the ancients' sense.* 6. *Religion reforms men in every thing.* 7. *A summary of our religion out of Erasmus.* 8. *Christ represented it unto us in his life, and taught us to deny not only sinful, but mere natural desires.* 9. *This is so clear in the Scriptures, that every one may see it, that had not rather talk and dispute than live well.* 10. *With what minds we must study the Scripture.*

1. But let it be remembered by all those that intend to go to heaven, that God's design is to banish all wickedness out of the world; and by inhabiting of our nature, to expel all sin and baseness out of it, and to bring in his own image. It is an excellent saying of Chrysostom[k], that "God hath so disposed matters in the gospel, as if he intended that there should not be a relic of wickedness left among us." The whole dispensation looks as if he designed to root it out from the face of the earth. And this only can bring the world into obedience to Christ; this only can set up his kingdom, and make all his enemies fall at his feet. Let us advance this in our hearts and lives, and it will set Christ upon his throne, and make him victorious among men. And therefore that excellent man gives this as a reason why idolatry did still remain in some places; because Christians were no better, and did not destroy all the works of the devil. And what is it, I beseech you, that still upholds all human inventions in such honour, but because there is so little true goodness appears in the lives of most that

[k] Ἐπεὶ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ πράγματα οὕτως ᾠκονόμησεν, ὥστε μηδὲ λείψανον ὑπολειφθῆναι τῆς ἀσεβείας. Homil. vii. in 1 ad Corinth. [tom. x. p. 64 B.]

oppose them? Men look upon the gospel as if it served for nothing but to form their opinions, but had no design of making them like to God. They are enemies to their own salvation, *πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτῶν στασιάζοντες σωτηρίαν*, 'mutinying and seditiously rising against their own eternal welfare.' They oppose him that comes to bring them the glad tidings of salvation, or whosoever shall press them in Christ's name to be very good. They dispute many times against too high a degree of holiness. They spend more time in excusing their faults than striving to amend them. They are wilfully bent not to be over happy while they are here in the world; and will not believe that God intends to advance them so high in a heavenly life. And so it is no wonder that things are so bad among others, when even they that profess the name of Christ (many of them) are no more in love with the *doctrine that is according to godliness.*

2. And indeed why should they be in love with a thing that encroaches so much upon their liberty, if they can go to heaven by some neat device that leaves them room to do as they list? Why should men be at the trouble to die to the world, if it be the design of Christ to make them great men in it? As Cato counted it one of his oversights, (of his *παραράματα*, as Simplicius[1] relates it,) that he took a journey by water when he might have gone by land; so men may well count it foolishness to go through the tears of repentance, to wash off all the dirt and filth, when they hope they may go to heaven through the earth, though they be all besmeared with the mire of the world. But it is not great boasts of the purity of religion, of the holiness of ordinances, and such like things, that will always carry the name from purity of heart, and holiness of life. There was a time when it was the greatest glory of Christians that they were holy themselves, as well as that they had an holy religion; and so I hope it will one day be again. Then the gospel flourishes, when men can argue for the divinity of it from the great reformation that it works in those that profess it, whom it makes truly divine. And so in the days of Origen they were able to do; for he challenges Celsus[m] the

[1] [Comment. in Epicteti Enchiridion, cap. 9. p. 52.]
[m] Lib. i. contr. Cels. [§. 9. tom. i. p. 328 C.]

heathen to tell him how it should happen ἀθεεὶ, without a special hand of God, that such a multitude of sick persons should be recovered of most desperate diseases whereof they had long laboured, by preaching of the gospel only. When we see so many rid of their intemperance, injustice, neglect of God, and such like things; we must needs see that that word is from God, which is ἀπαλλακτικὸς τοσούτων κακῶν, 'able to free them from such evils,' too stubborn for all the philosophy in the world to deal withal.

3. In the next book but one, the same Origen[n] adventures to bring the excellent lives of Christians for an argument of the divinity of Christ, whom they worshipped. And he saith, that the very worst of them, even they who were most slothful in their religion, did make greater progress in virtue than the very best of the heathen. Which was a plain argument he thought ὅτι οὐχ ἡ τυχοῦσα θειότης ἐν αὐτῷ· 'that there was no ordinary divinity in that person' who did such great things in his followers. And when in the next book[o] Celsus by way of scorn calls the Christians and Jews bats, and frogs, and worms, and such like insects, who flock together, and contend with each other which are the greatest sinners, he tells him what noble lives the Christians did lead; and asks him whether he was not ashamed to call him a crawling worm, who ascends up to heaven to live with God, and sends up pure prayers unto him; that doth all things as if God saw him, and speaks all things as if he heard him; and cannot be persuaded from godliness by any dangers, any labour, any fair words and language. "Will not all this," saith he, "be sufficient to save a man from being compared to a worm, whatsoever he might be called before so great a godliness? What! must they, who repel the sharpest stings to wanton pleasures, that are pure and chaste, knowing that there is no other way to be made familiar with God, be but cousins to worms, and neighbours to frogs? Cannot the brightness of righteousness, that makes a man sociable, friendly, full of justice, humanity and benignity, do nothing to vindicate a man from the condition of a bat or an owl? What then must they be who live in the filth and dirt of the world, and wallow in all beastly lusts?" Thus those gallant

[n] Lib. iii. [§. 29. p. 466 C.]

[o] [Lib. iv. §. 25, 6. p. 518, 520.]

spirits durst outbrave the heathens, and dare them to show any such men as the Christians were.

4. And I wish that we could do so at this day, and did not justly deserve the name of bats, that see not what the gospel designs; of worms, that, out of covetousness, not humility, crawl upon the earth; of frogs, that love a moist and sensual life. It is a good saying of Chrysostom[p], that "God is not so much wondered at from the clearness of the heavens, ὡς ἀπὸ βίου καθαροῦ, as from a pure and heavenly life." And therefore saith he, when we dispute with the Gentiles, οὐ τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰς μέσον παράγομεν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, οὓς θηρίων χεῖρον διακειμένους ἔπεισε γένεσθαι ἐφαμίλλους ἀγγέλοις· "we do not allege the heavens, but men for a proof; who, lying in a condition worse than beasts, are persuaded by the gospel to emulate the angels." And when we speak of this change, we stop their mouths, and they have no more to say. But alas! now religion is a thing described in books, and we cannot say to opposers, Behold the men that transcribe it into their lives. It lies in paper, and is the work of the printer; but of nobody else. Where shall we find the men who lead such a life as is delineated by our Lord, and studies to conform himself to his will? There are scarce enough of these men to make an argument; but most that are called Christians are the confutation of the religion of Christ. I cannot forbear to speak to such in the words of the same sweet father to the false Christians in his days. "Suppose a Gentile come to thee and say, If thou lookest for a kingdom, why dost thou mind this world so much? Sure thou dost but talk: for if thou didst expect the terrible tribunal of Christ hereafter, why dost thou not despise the terrible things of this world now? If thou expectest immortality, why dost thou not laugh at death? What canst thou now say for thyself and religion, who tremblest at the loss of thy riches for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and rejoicest at the gain of a farthing? This is that which scandalizeth the Gentiles; and therefore do not any longer make apologies for thy religion διὰ ῥημάτων, ἀλλὰ διὰ πραγμάτων, 'by words, but by deeds,' that it may be manifested there is such a religion in being alive in the world, and not dead in books; and that

[p] Homil. xviii. in Epist. ad Rom. [tom. ix. p. 638 C.]

they may see the gospel commands things that may be done, and doth not draw a Plato's idea, (or as we say, an Utopian commonwealth, which can never be put in practice.) Suppose a Gentile should say to thee, How shall I know ὅτι δύνατα ἐπέταξεν ὁ θεὸς, 'that your God hath commanded things possible?' They look like things that cannot be done which you speak of, and I never saw any Christian such a man. Behold thou wast brought up from thy childhood in this religion, and yet thou dost no such thing. What will they now say? perhaps thou wilt show him some other body, and bid him look upon the monks that live in the wilderness, what holy lives they lead. O most shameful apology! For he will say, What then, must I turn a monk? must I live in the mountains and deserts? must I forsake all company to be a Christian? This is a strange religion, which a man cannot be of, unless he leave the society of men; a religion that cannot dwell in towns and cities. This truly is a great disgrace to Christian piety, to make as though it could not inhabit in any place, and be performed by any men. Δεῖξόν μοι (saith he) ἄνθρωπον γυναῖκα ἔχοντα καὶ παιδία καὶ οἰκίαν, καὶ φιλοσοφοῦντα· 'show me a man that hath an house, wife and children, and yet is a Christian;' for Christ doth not say, Let your light shine in mountains and deserts, but before men. This I do not speak (saith he) to disgrace those that live so retired, but to bemoan our cities, which have driven virtue out of them into the wilderness[q]."

5. Some Christians, it seems, were so good as to be able by their lives to defend the Christian cause; and others again were so bad, that they had nothing to say for their religion, but that there were better than themselves in the world. But our case at this day is far sadder: for many that live in sin will take upon them to be the most excellent Christians, the standard and measure of all others, because they can talk; and account all them but 'moral men,' who are not cast into the same mould of opinion with themselves. They would be taken for the examples of piety, who have not yet mortified the flesh, especially the subtler part of it, pride, vainglory, hatred and strife. But let the Scripture determine who are the godly persons; they, or those men who frame their opinions and

[q] Homil. xxvi. in Epist. ad Rom. [tom. ix. p. 717.]

lives by the Scripture, and not by any other books. And Phavorinus methinks hath done our religion a great deal of right and credit too, who in his Lexicon, where he explains the Greek language, thus defines a Christian and Christianity. "A Christian (saith he) is ὁ τὸ σῶμα, &c. who hath by Christ crucified the body with the affections and lusts, and keeps all the commands of Christ. And the property of a Christian is faith working by love: and afterward, it is the property of a Christian to purify himself from all filthiness by the blood of Christ, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God, and the love of our Lord." So he a little enlarges those words of the apostle, 1 Cor. vii. 1[r]. And again he defines Christianism to be a "despising of things here below for the profession of Christ; and an acknowledgment of godliness leading to eternal life." Whatsoever false Christianity there is among men, which falls short of this, and yet passes with great credit in the world, it will at last discover itself by some carnal action or other, which will betray its partiality. As the cat in the fable could play the woman no longer, when the mouse came in her way; so these men can no longer act the part of Christians when some pleasure, or credit, or gain to which they are addicted, gives them a fair occasion to serve themselves. Cedrenus[s] reports that this was one thing wherewith the queen of Sheba posed Solomon, viz. that she apparelled a great many boys and girls in the very same clothes, so that by their gesture, and habit, and carriage they could not be distinguished; and she bid him tell her of which sex every one of them was. He called for some water and bid every one of them wash; and the boys rubbing their faces pretty hard as they used to do, but the girls only gently sleeking them over, or scarce touching them with their fingers, he easily knew the difference. Even so, howsoever men may dissemble their natures, and put themselves into such a dress of religion as if they were no less masculine and strong Christians than others, yet you will find them to be so tender to themselves in the washing and purifying of themselves from some filthiness or other, that they will soon discover their effeminate constitution.

[r] Ἐπίγνωσις εὐσεβείας εἰς ζώην αἰωνίαν ὁδηγοῦσα. [p. 751.]

[s] [P. 77. Compare the Parable of the Pilgrim, chap. 24. vol. iv. p. 208.]

6. For religion consists not only in acts of worship, whereby men may smooth their faces and give them a superficial gloss: but in the thorough scouring of their souls from all evil habits which stick so fast unto them. It makes us not only to bow our bodies, and study the neater and more complemental performances: but to undertake the rougher and severer duties, to bow our souls before God, and to purge our hearts from all that is offensive to his eyes, and hinders him from embracing us. "Where the gospel comes in truth, (saith Erasmus[t] very well,) it makes people more obedient to their magistrates, more observant of the laws; lovers of peace, and haters of war. Husbands and wives agree better, children are more obedient to parents, and servants to masters; no workman but performs his task with greater fidelity, nor tradesman but doth as he would be done by: and, to speak in a word, all men will become more kind, and slow to revenge; less greedy of the world, and more sober in the enjoyment of it."

7. And give me leave from that excellent man to present you with a sum of Christian doctrine which he would have a learner of religion keep always in his eye: He must think that Christ was an heavenly teacher, that came to purchase a people that should depend on Heaven, and not trust in this world, as those that were in another manner rich, wise, noble, potent and happy, than the world is. A people that should by contempt of the world attain a felicity that others seek after by enjoying of it. A people of a single eye, ignorant of all envy, malice and spite. That should be void of all lust, and meditating an angelical life in this flesh. Not making divorces, as being a people that could either mend any thing, or else bear it. That should not swear, as not distrusting nor deceiving any: that should not seek after money, as having their treasures in heaven. That should not be tickled with vain-glory, as referring all to the glory of Christ their Saviour. That should not be ambitious, as knowing the greater they were, the more they should do for Christ; and the lower, they should submit to all for his sake. That should not be angry when provoked, or give ill language, much less take revenge, as being men

[t] In præfat. ad suum Ecclesiast. [tom. v. col. 769.]
[u] De Ratione Veræ Theol. [tom. v. col. 84.]

that must return good for evil. That must be of such an innocent life, that heathens themselves should approve of them. That must be of a childlike purity, as being born again. That should live like the birds and lilies from day to day. That should perfectly agree among themselves, as members one of another. That should do all Christian offices one for another, helping others in need, bearing of their burdens, or making them lighter by their officious love. That should be so taught by the Spirit to live after the example of Christ, that they should be the *salt of the earth*, the *light of the world, a city set upon an hill*. To whom this life seems vile, and immortality most desirable. That should fear neither tyranny, nor death, nor the devil himself, trusting in Christ only. That should always be ready to die, and give an account. This is the scope of Christ's doctrine, and such men we are to labour more and more that we may grow. *Hæc sunt authoris nostri dogmata nova, quæ nulla philosophorum familia tradidit:* 'these are the new principles of the Author of our faith, which no sect of the philosophers hath delivered;' this is the new wine to be committed only to new bottles.

8. All this Christ expressed in his life, and doth but desire us to follow his example. He was so innocent, that the false witnesses who were suborned for the purpose could not tell how handsomely to accuse him. He was so meek, that he was led like a sheep to the slaughter. So free he was from covetousness, that he had nothing, nor affected any thing that we can hear of. He was so humble, that he washed his disciples' feet: so free from ambition, that he would not be made a king when the people would have crowned him. He stuck not to die the death of the cross. When they buffeted him, he returned not their strokes; when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to the righteous judgment of God. *And hereunto are we called, because Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth*[x].

All this that I have said from him may be thus reduced into some order, by considering that our religion teaches us to cross

[x] 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23.

all our own desires, and to be wholly at the will of our Lord and Master. To believe what he reveals, and to obey what he commands; to fear only what he threatens, and to hope for nothing but what he promises. And our desires being either sinful or only natural, it teaches us to deny ourselves in both: to fast as well as to be sober; to be content with poverty as well as not to be covetous: to bear disgrace as well as not to hunt after vainglory; to endure pain patiently as well as to despise unlawful pleasures; to suffer oppression as well as to forbear to oppress and domineer over others; to put up wrongs as well as not to do wrong to our neighbour; to lie quietly on a sick bed, as well as not to abuse health; to submit to persecution, as well as to be innocent.

9. The devil hath no way to hinder those that read the Scripture seriously from minding these things, but by making them look upon it as a book that teaches them to be knowing rather than good, to dispute rather than to live. And thus the Pharisees cozened themselves, who studied this holy writ to make them subtle and wise, very curious and nice about several cases that might be argued in the ceremonial law; but they did not look upon it as a book that should make them like to him that made it. There they learnt to oppose the Sadducees who denied another life, more than they did to attain that life by opposing and subduing all their lusts. And so at this day men read the Scriptures to defend their opinions, to uphold their cause, to see if they will be on their side, and to make them able to oppose all adversaries. And then imagining that it sounds altogether that way that they would have it, they come to be as zealous and fierce for their opinion as other men are for holy living: and no man can urge a Divine command more peremptorily than they will do their doubtful opinions. This they make their religion, and to cry up these particular persuasions is taken to be earnestness for God and his cause. But while they dispute of God, they do not know him; and while they wrangle about justification, they remain unsanctified; and while they contend about the extent of Christ's redemption, they take care that themselves shall have no great benefit by it. Just as the philosophers disputed about the nature of honesty, while they should have lived honestly; and spent their time in debating what the form of

virtue was, while they should have done virtuously: so do men now dispute about the nature of faith, hope and charity, till they leave themselves no time to exercise and put in practice any of them. Nay, as for charity, *citius hanc reperias inter idiotas quam inter hos qui sine fine disputant*, as Erasmus well saith: 'you shall sooner find this among vulgar people, than among those that dispute without end.'

10. All those therefore who are subject to this disease (which I doubt is too common) must mind the true end for which God gave us this holy book, which was not to fill our heads with curious notions, but our hearts with holy and devout affections: not to teach us nice and subtle distinctions, but to tell us plainly how to distinguish between good and evil: not to make us able combatants against all opinions that swarm in the world, but to arm us against all the lusts of the flesh which most abound, and war most against the soul. And we must have no other end in studying of this divinity, but *ut mutemur, ut rapiamur, ut afflemur, ut transformemur in ea quæ discimus*, 'that we may be changed, that we may be rapt and snatched away from ourselves, that we may receive the breath of heaven, that we may be transformed into the things that we learn.' And then we have profited much, not when we can dispute more sharply, but when we can live more exactly; not when our wits are more acute, but when our hearts are more dull to all earthly things: not when we are more confident of our knowledge, but when we are less proud, angry, covetous, voluptuous, and subject to any other vice. This kind of philosophy (as the same Erasmus speaks) is *in affectibus situm verius quam in syllogismis; vita est magis quam disputatio*[y], &c.; 'seated in the affections rather in syllogisms; it is a life rather than a disputation; an inspiration rather than learning; a transformation rather than a subtle reason.' Come therefore, whoever thou art that readest the word of God with some pious dispositions, *orans magis quam argumentans, et transformari studens potius quam armari*[z], 'praying rather than arguing, and with a mind to be transfigured rather than to be armed.' Then shalt thou find that true felicity which is desired by all; and the true way to attain it, which is known but by a few. Thou shalt find both

[y] In Paraclesi. [tom. v. col. 141 E.] [z] [col. 142 D.]

doctrines and examples giving thee an absolute form of life, and instructing thee how to be as good as thou canst desire. But if thou readest the Scripture only to fight against others, not thyself; to satisfy thy mind in disputable points, rather than to know the unquestionable ways of holiness; and intendest to express what thou knowest rather in syllogisms than in thy life, and good talk rather than good deeds: thou art not like to be a Christian. The Divine Spirit loves not to dwell in contentious souls: truth uses not to be found in the midst of a scuffle, nor loves she to lie in a mind that is set round only with thorny notions and perplexed distinctions. Study therefore how to live the life of God, become a babe, and bring a lowly mind; or else a worse thing will come of it than thy being deceived. For the world will be filled with a noise of religion without any substance of it, and it will be embroiled with a factious zeal, under the name of spending men's selves for Jesus Christ. And what though others may account thee but a pitiful wretch who art not of their way, nor well able perhaps to fight for any opinion? Thou art a conqueror glorious enough, if thou fallest under no vice, nor submittest thyself to the will of any lust, though thou art inferior to others, and art overcome in craft and confidence.

CONCLUSION.

1. *All this hath been said only to warn us lest we be hypocrites, and do not know it.* 2. *Let none take occasion hereby to call piety by the name of hypocrisy.* 3. *Though it is common with profane men so to do.* 4. *Who are too bad to be mended by discourses.* 5. *And some of them as hypocritical as the Pharisees.* 6. *For there are several sorts of hypocrites.* 7. *Some of which are profane.* 8. *And others take no more than a natural pleasure in reading of these truths.*

1. You have seen what whited sepulchres the Pharisees were, and what a goodly appearance they made in the outside, when they were no better than charnel houses, or rather stinking graves, within. And now, for a conclusion of this discourse, you may observe, that those *sepulchres* to which our Saviour com-

pares them were *whited*[a] on purpose, that the people might see them before they came near to them, and so take heed of being defiled and polluted by them. For the Jews (as a very learned man observes[b]) thought themselves to be made unclean by touching of a grave, as well as of a dead carcase; and therefore because the tombs were hidden sometimes by the long grass, (which he makes the meaning of that place, Luke xi. 44,) they brushed them over with lime, so that strangers who passed that way might not unawares stumble upon them, and contract a legal defilement. And just so doth our Saviour point out the Pharisees in their colours; both that men might take heed how they dealt with them, and that they might avoid their hypocritical temper, not taking that for godliness which had so much secret wickedness lurking under it.

And for the same reason it is that I have treated thus particularly of the false religion that is among us; that so all men, seeing wherein hypocrisy doth consist, may fly away from it, as the Jews did from a dead body or a grave, and may walk in the plain old path of all real and unfeigned holiness.

2. And considering that this was my end, I hope none that reads me will be so profane as to make use of all that hath been said to the dishonour of religion, and the defaming of pious people. It would grieve me very much if any should take occasion from hence to call all those 'precisians, dissembling fellows, and larved saints,' who pray in their families, hear sermons, and perform other pious duties: for unless they have a mind to abuse themselves and others, they cannot but see clearly that it is not less than the Pharisees did, but a great deal more, that God requires of us. These things men ought to do, and not to leave the rest undone[c]. And *except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*[d].

3. It must be confessed, that there always have been men of corrupt hearts, that use to suck poison out of these discourses, and to spit their venom at all godliness; but it is because they have an hatred both to the shadow, and to the truth and substance of it. There was never any name given to a bad party

[a] Matt. xxiii. 27. [b] V. Pococke. Not. Miscell. in Port. Mos. [cap. v. p. 74, 5.] [c] Matt. xxiii. 23. [d] Matt. v. 20.

of professors, but the most holy and severe persons have by such men been branded and stigmatized with it. A Pharisee in their mouths shall extend so far as to be a nickname for all that are strictly pious; and an hypocrite is in their language a man who will not be so profane as themselves. And it will be very well if the name of *fanatic* become not ere long of as large a signification; and that all those be not included in it who believe that there is an hell, and dare not run with others to the same excess of riot.

4. These profane spirits do not at this time fall under my pen. Whom I need not decipher, they being blacker than my ink, and fouler than that any man of reason should be warned not to approach unto them. I look upon them as fitter to be corrected and amended by whips and stocks, than by sober and pious books. Their whole life is one continued debauch, and they have no leisure to be seriously considerate. Their minds are so sopped in drink, that they have left no room to suck in any of these instructions. They are so slavishly resigned to other bestial desires, that one may as well read a lecture to a goat, as exhort them to be chaste or sober. We must leave them to some sickness or other infliction of God upon them for their chastisement; and then perhaps some good book (whereof the world hath good store) may help the operation of the physic, though alone it will work nothing at all upon them.

5. But some of these there are, who have not yet sinned away all tenderness; that let devotion take its turn, and hope by such good moods and fits to make an excuse to God for all their looseness and profaneness. These men, though they do not observe it, have the very dregs of this Pharisaical humour in them, and would have some pious action, some little strictnesses, to satisfy for their drunkenness and other filthiness, as the other would have them to cover their injustice and uncharitableness. All their prayers and fastings are as weak and ineffectual to the rendering of them sober, as the same things are in others to the making of them righteous. And yet they perhaps take themselves to be no less pious, and that with a contempt, if not violent hatred of all others, than the most ceremonious Pharisee that ever breathed. Let them therefore either reform and become new men, or else not take it ill if we call them profane hypocrites, as they call others Pharisaical.

The apostle puts them together with the other into one catalogue, and bids them *not be deceived, for neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*[e]. And besides, it is too frequently seen, that when these men have wasted their estates, they take no less unjust courses to repair them than they did prodigally to spend them. Shirking and cheating tricks are then no such crimes when they have need of them; and they are now against injustice, because they have no temptation to be unjust.

6. Let these *publicans and sinners* therefore observe once for all, that the hypocritical temper is not of one kind, but as various and divers as the inclinations of men are: only, injustice and covetousness being more cleanly and secret vices than the foul and noted crimes of drunkenness, fornication, swearing, and such like, they can be more bold to join themselves with a religious profession than the other can. It is a pretty fancy which Crusius[f] observes out of a book of a modern Greek, how that the devil taking a wife called Ἀδικία, 'unrighteousness,' he begat seven daughters, and thus bestowed them. The first whose name was Ἀλαζονεία, 'arrogance and loftiness,' he gave in marriage to the great ones of the world: and the second, called Ἀκρίβεια, 'sordidness or covetise,' he gave to the common people. The third, who was named Φαλσία, (so they now speak,) 'fraud and falsity,' he matched to the husbandmen, who it seems in that country had a great deal of it under a garb of simplicity. And for his fourth, called Ζηλία, 'envy and emulation,' he found a fit husband among the handicraftsmen and tradesmen, who look with an evil eye upon their neighbours. Ὑποκρισία, or 'dissimulation,' which was his fifth,' he disposed of to the clergy, who knew better how to hide their vices than others. And then his sixth daughter named Ἔπαρσις, 'pride and self-exaltation', he gave to be a waiting gentlewoman to the womenkind. But as for the seventh, called Πορνεία, 'fornication or adultery,' he would give her in marriage to none, nor let her stir from his own house, καὶ ὅποιος

[e] 1 Cor. vi. 9. [f] Ex Lib. cui tit. Ἄνθος τῶν χαρίτων. [in Turco-Græcia, lib. iii. p. 222.]

ἄνθρωπος τὴν θελήσεις νὰ τὴν ἔβρη (as their language now is), 'that whosoever hath a mind to her, may come thither and find her.'

7. By this conceit he sets forth how all sorts of men have their vices to which they are most inclinable; and I mention it for these two purposes: first, that all men should take heed of that sin which hath or may easily have most of their love; for though they hate all other never so much, and live in the exercise of some devotion, yet they will be but false and hypocritical Christians. And secondly, that all incontinent persons should consider whether they go to satisfy their base desires, and what a fast hold the devil hath of them above all others. I doubt that most of those that jeer at religion are of this sort; and have such a familiarity with this unclean devil, that unless they seek for help betime, he will never be cast out. For, as that Greek saith, that he must go to the devil's lodgings who would have a whore; so saith Solomon also, that *the dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell*[g].

8. But there are others who lead a civil life, in nothing transgressing the laws of the land, that in reading of these things may find themselves well pleased with me, and may take themselves to be truly religious because they cannot but disgust this false religion that rules in the world. But they also must consider that truth hath a natural congruity in it to a rational mind; and that there is a certain pleasure which a mere earthly man may perceive from the apt representations which are made of things to his understanding faculty. As the eye is pleased with well mixed colours, and the ear is gratified with sounds of a sweet composure; so is the mind of man delicately touched with wise discourses, which report truths in any handsome order unto it. If these things therefore fall in with the sense and apprehension of any man's soul, they cannot but tickle him with some delight; this picture of the Jewish hypocrite which I have drawn, if it be but true, though not exact, will present him that looks upon it with some pleasure. But let not any man think that therefore he is pious, because he delights in pious treatises; for this may be but a natural satisfaction: and it is also one of the deceits which I have given

[g] Prov. ix. 18.

a touch of, to be warm against a party which is contrary to ourselves, and to be excited unto some indignation against that which is plainly false.

I shall add no more but my earnest prayers to God, and my request to the reader, that these things may be understood and improved to the end for which they were written: the advancement of an impartial respect to all God's commandments, and the hating of every false way. Unto which also the following sermon is purposely addressed.

THE

EPITOME OF MAN'S DUTY.

BEING

A DISCOURSE UPON MICAH VI. 8,

WHERE THE HYPOCRITICAL PEOPLE ARE BRIEFLY DIRECTED HOW TO PLEASE GOD.

Qui in vitiis sibi placent non credent nobis, etiamsi solem manibus gestemus.—LACTANT.

THE

EPITOME OF MAN'S DUTY.

MICAH vi. 8.

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

THAT there are laws of God engraven upon the tables of our hearts, both the light of nature and the holy Scriptures plainly tell us. Whensoever we raze out or blot any of these laws, we prick our consciences, and draw blood of our own souls; and we become traitors also to God's majesty, whose image and superscription we vilely deface; and we know very well that we have incurred his high displeasure. Now it hath been the inquiry of all men how to heal these wounds and gashes in the conscience, and how to pacify the wrath of God, and obtain reconciliation with him. Yet such a love they have to their old traitorous practices, which they are loath to leave, that they would willingly find a way to please God, and to please themselves both together. They will spare no cost to be at peace with God, so it may not cost them the life of their sins, and they may still be at peace with them. This is too manifest in the story of heathens, Jews, and Christians.

Men would willingly please God and themselves too.

The heathens, knowing that they had offended their gods, but having no mind to be perfect friends with them, invented all the ways they could think of to get their good-will, and obtain a grant of them to sin, and not be punished; a license to follow their own desires without any disturbance. This was the original of the multitude of gods, of uncouth ceremonies, horrid mysteries, panic terrors

Apparent from the heathens.

and affrightments; for they stood in a terrible dread that the gods intended some mischief to them which they knew they deserved. The Athenians (for example) worshipped many gods, who they thought might do them either good or harm; and lest there should be any that they performed no devotion unto, and therefore might owe them a spite, they made an altar to an *unknown God*. Or, as we may gather from Diogenes Laertius[a], there being a great mortality among them, and they obtaining no ease by all their prayers and sacrifices to the gods of their own country, they imagined that it came from some unknown hand, and so worshipped that god whosoever he was, that he might be reconciled to them.

From the Jews.

Just such likewise was the humour of the Jews, though better taught by God. They could contentedly bestow any thing upon him, so that they might but have their own wills; and when their sacrifices were costly and expensive, they hoped God would be well satisfied, and account himself no loser by their sins, which brought him in so many fat services. And if these would not give him full content, rather than he should not be satisfied, and rather than their sins should be sacrificed, they would offer their own children unto him. They ask him if he would have their first-born, (as it was the manner of some heathens to sacrifice men and women upon their altars to their gods;) if he desired the fattest and fairest child in the flock should be made an oblation to him; or if he would have all their estates evaporated in sacrifices, all their riches smoke in his holy fires. It is the art of the superstitious man to flatter God, and fawn upon him; to bribe him (as it were) with a rich and gaudy worship at some seasons, that he may have liberty at other times not to worship him nor serve him as he ought. And this being a timorous disposition of soul, it makes the man very scrupulous how to please God, and very lavish in his expenses, out of fear that he will otherwise be very troublesome to him if he be not pleased.

And from the Christians.

There is still the same disease in the soul of most that are called Christians. They know that they have sinned, and that God is very angry; and they

[a] [In Epimenide, i. 10. §. 3.]

know that he is very powerful, and able to tear them in pieces; that he is a consuming fire, and can devour them in a moment: and this fear makes them sigh and weep, knock their breasts, and make a mournful noise; fast and pray, run from church to church to offer him sacrifice; hear God's word, and read it, or do any other thing but only do the will of God, according to what they hear and read to be their duty. For they do not see any such goodness in God that should attract their love, and make them delight in his life, and accord with his will; but they are only amazed at his greatness, and tremble to think of the evil that he can do them. They will give him (as it were) the fruit of their body, they will pine and starve their corpse with fasting, if the doing that penance will satisfy for their surfeiting and drunkenness, or for their greedy, ravenous, and devouring covetousness. They will spare no hallowed breath, if their prayers may but blow away the infection of their oaths, lies, corrupt communication that comes out of their mouths. If he will have a drink offering of their very tears, they will not grudge it, so be it that they may drown the tears of the oppressed, and wash off the stains of cruelty and unmercifulness. They will mourn and lament; they will cry and howl upon their beds; they will sigh and groan; they will walk heavily and sadly; they will shut themselves up from company; they will make large confessions of their offences: I cannot tell what it is that they will not do; but all is to intreat the Lord not to be angry with them for their rebellions: and if ever they commit the like again, they promise to make him as good an amends as they do now, and resolve to fast and mourn, and bewail the fault; so that he shall not say they did nothing to please him.

The reason of men's endeavour to please him without leaving their sins.

And the reason of all this is, because men love their sins well themselves; and think that God can love them also if he will, and that he need not be so offended and distasted unless he please. They hope therefore that they may entreat him to be more kind than to take away their beloved lusts from their embraces; seeing it is not his nature, but only his imperious will (as they imagine), that sets him so against them. And hence it is that they earnestly beg his pardon for what is past; and for to incline him to condescend to their desires of

not being angry with their sins, they are willing and ready also otherwise to gratify him, and to give him something that may please him as well as their forsaking of them. And at last, by long use and practice, they grow to this conceit, that they cannot imagine what God would have more than that they should confess their sins, and be sorry for them. And they live as if they could not devise what should be more pleasing to God, nor what he should require further of mortal creatures: whereas my text tells you plainly that it is the corruption of their wills rather than the weakness of their understanding that makes them judge thus perversely; for it is plain enough what is acceptable unto God, *The Lord hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what else is it, but to do justly?* &c. Thou needest not ask so many questions, (as they do, ver. 6, 7,) as if thou knewest not what God would have, nor what thou shouldst do to him more than thou dost, unless thou shouldst offer thy children to him, or all the beasts in thy pastures, &c. For a little inquiry will acquaint thee that God is very well pleased if thou wilt be just, merciful, and humble.

The sense of the words from their dependence on the foregoing.

That seems to be the very true sense and meaning of those words foregoing, *Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord,* &c., ver. 6, 7. For this chapter contains the pleading of God with his people; in the first verse of which he calls to the prophet, as his attorney, to manage his plea which he puts in against them. And the prophet, in the second verse, calls for silence whiles he pleads in open court in his behalf. After which, in ver. 3, 4, 5, he opens the case, and shows how guilty they were, even from their own confession, that God had never given them any cause to be weary of his service, but rather that he had done them all the good that they could desire. And he leads their memories back as far as Egypt and the wilderness, where his mercies were wonderful to them, bidding them *testify against him,* and put in their plea also, if they had any thing to say in justification of their defection from him.

Now in those words, ver. 6, 7, the prophet seems to bring in the people interrupting of him in this complaint against them, saying for themselves, in a grumbling manner, *What would you have us do?* what is it that you would have us give to God? Do we not offer him sacrifices, and bow our faces be-

fore his dwelling-place? What would he have more than this? What better provision shall we make for him at his house? They speak like men that knew not how to please God, and as if he was such an one that nobody knew what would content him. *Will he be pleased* (say they) *with a thousand of rams?* What! would he have all the sheep in our flocks driven to his altars? Would he have all the oil in the land run in a stream to his house? or would he have our *firstborn* children now sacrificed, which formerly we might exchange for something else? Would he have them in kind now offered up unto him? or would he have all the *fruit of our body*, the blood of all our children, one and other, sprinkled before him, to expiate for our sins? No; what need all this language? (saith the prophet here in my text,) why do you make yourselves so strange to what I say? as though you could not tell without all these aspersions cast upon God what he would have you to do? *He hath showed thee, O man,* who talkest in this sort, *what is good;* and tell me what thou thinkest in thy own conscience it is *that the Lord requires of thee.* Is it any thing else but *to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God?* Their silence, and not answering to the question, argues that it is unanswerable; and therefore the prophet goes on in the rest of the chapter, without any interruption from them, to lay open their sins and punishments. It is not such a difficult matter to please God as men make it; they know well enough what it is that he requires, if they have any mind to do it; and it is no such strange thing that they should wonder he requires it at their hands.

In the words you may observe these six things.

Six observations from the words.

1. That there is some duty to be paid to God by every one of us.

2. That it is easy to know this duty.

3. That God exacts of man nothing in his duty which is unequal or unjust, and therefore it is easy also to do it.

4. That a man's own conscience will be witness against him if he do not perform this duty which God requires.

5. Justice, mercy, and humble deportment before God are the sum of it.

6. These things were always more valued by God than sacrifices, and other the most costly services.

All these lie plainly before your eyes, as you may soon discern in the text; or they will all manifestly appear to him that will seriously attend these following considerations which I will offer to his thoughts upon every one of them.

The proof of the first, from four things.

For the truth of the first, that there is something owing by every one of us unto God, I need not search all the divine writings to make out God's title to man's duty; here are evidences enough for it within the compass of the text.

He is our Lord.

First, he is our *Lord: What doth the Lord require of thee?* and that by a title paramount to all others. He gave us our being; and it is one of the regalia of the crown of heaven, that all the subjects of that kingdom are perfect creatures: we are all his vassals, and can no more be absolved from fealty and homage to him, than we can cease to be when we are. All the tenures, you know, among us were held by some services; and that of pure villainage made a man most at the will of the lord: now such is that which we owe to God, but more pure and absolute than any other can possibly be. For our persons are tied and bound to him, and not only our services; and we are not bound by our own consent only, but we are *servi nati,* 'born his servants:' yea, more than so, we are *servi creati,* (a title peculiar to him,) 'created servants,' who owe their whole selves to him.

To deny therefore all obedience unto God, is to say, *We are our own, who is lord over us?* It is the highest piece of pride and insolency, an unparalelled rebellion against our natural Sovereign, a crime never to be pardoned but by his infinite clemency, and our unfeigned subjection to him as long as we live.

We are men.

2. We are *men: He hath showed thee, O man, what is good.* And as we are reasonable creatures, (1.) we are endowed with more excellent powers of obeying God than other creatures; we are tied to him in the most noble services, and fitted for the most honourable employments. (2.) And, being reasonable creatures, we likewise have a sense above all others of our obligations to the supreme Lord of the world; and our own consciences give us the lie, if we say that we are free to do what we will. We know very well that when we

took a being from him, we took an oath of faith and service to him. There is ὅρκος ἐνουσιωμένος τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι[a], as an heathen himself could say, 'an oath inessenced and consubstantiated with mankind;' an oath of allegiance included in our very being; a sacrament which we took to God in our mother's womb when we had first leave to become men. Our very reason and conscience is that ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου, (in Arrian's phrase,) that promise and engagement whereby we swear to God before we can speak, as soon as a soul is breathed into us. He that breaks this sacred oath or promise doth unman himself as much as he can, and becomes unreasonable. And (3.) as reasonable likewise, a man can soon tell himself, that since he requires service of persons and things below him, he is much more bound in service to the Most High, who is the Creator of us all.

God makes demands.

3. God requires something of us which he would never do if it was not his due: he is not so unjust as to make demands where he hath no right; nor so needy as to beg that which is none of his own; nor so unkind as to follow us with continual arrests, if we were his neighbours only, and not his tenants and debtors; nor so unwise as to maintain officers and servants where he hath nothing to receive. These are the words of the prophet of God to men: now why should God send his messengers and ministers and call upon men so earnestly, but that there are some services incumbent upon them of which they ought to be highly sensible? What king makes proclamation where he expects no subjection? What lord issues out commands, and sends out his servants, where he hath no tenants that hold of him? It would be in vain to make such loud cries to men, if God expected nothing but that men should please themselves, and do to him as they thought good: and it is too late to ask *quo jure*, 'by what right' God requires our obedience; for I have already mentioned a title that comprehends all in it.

The worst of men confess his right.

4. The worst of men confess his right. They that will not love him will flatter him; they that will not give him all will give him some; and they that have been negligent seek to make him satisfaction. The Jews to whom the prophet here speaks, that would not do all

[a] Hierocles. [in Pythag. Carm. Aur. p. 28.]

his will, yet offer him large sums to buy off the punishment for their faults. As they who are bound by their tenures to personal service in the wars would many times rather send their servant in their stead; so would these men gladly give God content by sacrificing of their beasts, when they had no mind to offer up themselves. And all the ways whereby the poor heathen study to make him reparation for their wrongs, and atone him to them, are plain confessions of this truth, that we owe something to him.

In a matter so clear, I will not hold a candle to the sun, but first, I shall rather wonder that there should be any such persons in the world that live like brutes, as if God required nothing of them, but had made them to fill their bellies and their purses, and had given them leave not to be men. *Sons of Belial* they are (as the ancient Scripture calls them), men under no yoke or government, unless it be the tyranny of their own lusts and passions which domineer over them: men that hate instruction, and scorn reproof, as if we did them wrong when we tell them God requires that they should be better. Men that lift up the nose, like the wild ass in the wilderness which snuffs up the wind at her pleasure, and say, Who shall command them? I wish there were no such monsters in the world, that shake off the government of God, and say of Christ, *This man shall not reign over us:* that take it ill to be touched in the tender interest of their sins; that think (it is plain) neither God nor man can require more of them than they will give them.

Application against the professedly profane.

Take heed that all this be not true in your lives, if not in the temper of your spirits. Remember seriously this fundamental truth, which you all know well enough already, that you are not at liberty; that there are some indispensable duties lie upon you; that you are tied to God in the most sacred bonds; and that it must be your greatest care to see them well discharged.

And secondly, if this be true, let the libertines of this age look to it, who think that all duty smells of baseness and servitude, (for by that name they have learnt to call all our services,) and that Christ came to free us from obedience to God himself. And let us look to them also: for if God must expect nothing from them, then

And against pretended saints.

what presumption is it for us poor mortals to imagine that they must be just or faithful, or any thing else to us! And therefore you may observe, that at the same time that men began to think there was no obligation lay upon them of duty to God, they began to imagine that all their landlords also were usurpers, and that they had no rights but what the corruption of ancient times had given them.

But Christ did not make us the less men, by making us to become Christians: he hath in his title the name of our Lord. Duty and true grace are at no such difference as silly people imagine. Our obligations are not diminished, but our strength and power is increased: the service is not altered, but love mixed with justice makes it more easy. We are not discharged from our work, but our reward is swelled to an unmeasurable disproportion to it.

But I pass by this, because I hope there are none that hear me who set God and Christ at odds, and rob him of his creature under a pretence of making him a Christian.

The second observation proved.

The second truth, viz. that it is easy for men to know their duty, is clear from two passages in the text. 1. The Lord hath *showed* it to them. He hath demonstrated it, and made it very plain, so that if a *law* do not bind till it be promulgated, that injures not God's title at all, for he hath *shown* and proclaimed his mind. 2. It is so *shown*, that men cannot but see it and take notice of it, as the manner of the words by way of question doth clearly intimate, *What doth the Lord require of thee?* As if he should have said, Thou knowest very well, I need not tell it thee, it is sufficient only to put thee in mind of what thou art well acquainted with, even *to do justly, to love mercy, &c.*: and indeed it is so plain, that God shows it more ways than one.

God shows man his duty by his conscience.

1. He *shows* it in our own consciences by the light of reason. That the question supposes, and the apostle expressly saith, Rom. i. 19, *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them.* Rom. ii. 15, *Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, &c.* (1.) Man's soul doth not come out of God's hand like a sheet of white paper, in which there is

nothing writ or printed; but it is as a book impressed with many sacred letters and divine characters. And (2.) this book is not shut and clasped, but it stands open to every one's search. Nor (3.) is God's mind writ in some corner of the book, and wrapt up in leaves of darkness, but it shows itself, and the letters are so great that they will be read. Nor (4.) is the sense of this writing hard to be understood, but we call them common notions, first principles, which must be easy and perspicuous at the first sight: nor (5.) need we go to the learned for their comments upon them, or as Tertullian speaks, we need not appeal to a soul that hath been formed in the schools, bred in a library, and fed with academical notions, but *simplex et rudis, et impolita, et idiotica, illa ipsa de compito, de trivio, de textrino*[a], 'the most simple and rude, the most impolished and illiterate soul, the veriest highway soul, the soul that is bred in the shop or in the street, will testify to these things, as well as that which is brought up in a study, or learned retirements.' Nor (6.) is this book so blotted by our fall into the dirt, but that the great lines of our duty are fair and legible. Just as we see the sun in a cloud casts forth a light whereby we discern in what part of the heavens it is, or as a pearl will shine though it lie on a dunghill; so will these golden letters shine and glister in men's souls in an heap of rubbish; and this light will break forth through a veil of darkness: and (7.) where there are any *lacunæ*, any gaps or breaches in a particular soul, by comparing all the copies and consulting with one another's reasons, we should soon find the true sense. Yea, (8.) more than this, it is not in the power of any of you to raze out these characters. They are not at your liberty to expunge or alter. For they are not so much *scriptæ* as *natæ*, 'written' as 'born:' we did not put them into us, but we find them in us. Though I might here cry out, as Tertullian in another case, *O anima naturaliter Christiana*[b]*!* 'O soul, who naturally art a Christian!' yet let us look further and consider,

2. That in the Bible God *shows* our duty more clearly by the light of Revelation. Here we are informed so exactly both what God is and what man is, that he must be blind that doth not see that it is God's

By his word in the Scriptures.

[a] De Test. Animæ, cap. 1. [p. 65 A.] [b] [Apol. cap. xvii. p. 17 B.]

word, and that man's obedience is due unto it. The very style wherein it speaks is, *Thus saith the Lord*, a form of speech not to be found in other books. The contents of it about our duty are so clear and plain, that we may say with Solomon [c], תּוֹרָה אוֹר, *lex est lux*, 'the law is light.' Or as it is said in the vision of Habakkuk, which God bid him write and make plain upon tables (chap. ii. 2), *he that runs may read it.* And again, these plain things are so agreeable to the connate principles of our mind, and the natural sense that we have of goodness, that *he hath put his laws into our hearts;* and *we need not say one to another*, (as if it was a strange thing,) *Know the Lord, for all of us may know him, from the greatest to the least.* In short, this word is compared to a glass which shows unto us all our own deformities, and represents unto us likewise the face and image of God, whereby we should dress and compose ourselves to be beloved of him.

3. He shows us our duty by his ministers in the light of preaching. *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions* [d]. *Wilt thou judge the bloody city? yet thou shalt show her all her abominations* [e]. If there be any thing in this book that is not so plain and clear, God hath set them to expound and unfold it. If any thing be dark, they are to manifest it. They open to men God's word, and let them into the inwards and secrets of it. And by *manifestation of the truth, they commend themselves to every conscience of man in the sight of God*, as the apostle saith [f]; i. e. men know in their consciences that what we say in these matters is the very truth of God.

By his ministers.

4. The works of God in the world abundantly *show* it by the light of Providence. Those exemplary punishments I mean, upon notorious offenders, which speak the finger of God; and his rewards to the righteous, which have many times no less of God in them. By these God vindicates his authority, and shows that he is the supreme Governor; and that these are his laws, from which we ought by no means, as we love ourselves, to swerve or stir a foot. And so God saith, *the wickedness of Judah was discovered* [g], when he punished

By his works.

[c] Prov. vi. 23. [d] Isa. lviii. 1. [e] Ezek. xxii. 2. [f] 2 Cor. iv. 2. [g] Ezek. xvi. 57.

her for her iniquity. It had often before been discovered by the preaching of the prophets, but when that would not prevail, he laid it open in a more dreadful manner by the voice of his judgments, which bid all men mind their duty better.

By the church.

5. All the people and church of God do *show* it in the light of their lives. Their *light shines before men;* they *show forth the praises* or the virtues *of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light*[h]. Men cannot but see that there are many in the world that run not with them into the same excess of riot, that pray continually, that make a conscience of every word they speak; that are full of love and pity; that are ready to do good; of a peaceable and meek disposition, and ready to forgive, &c. These *show to men what is good*, and they have them continually before their eyes. It is well if it be not so plain that they become an eyesore to them; if they do not shine so bright in contradiction to their lives that they are offended at it. The church of God is called the *pillar and ground of truth*[i], because it doth hold forth the truth to men: and support it in the world, even as a pillar doth a proclamation which is affixed to it, so that all that pass by may read it. And this it doth not only by preaching and outward profession, but by the sincere practice of a multitude of professors. So that it is as easy for men to know their duty as to know what a king's proclamation is, which is not only cried, but likewise posted up in the market-place, that all may read it.

We cannot then plead ignorance, we need not be seekers.

Let us not then be so dull as to think on the one hand to plead ignorance, or weakness of parts, or insufficiency of light in excuse for neglect of our duty; or so wild as on the other hand to turn seekers in religion, as though nobody could yet find the way to heaven. The Lord hath *showed* thee, O man, what thou hast to do; and therefore thou shalt not be able to pretend that thou wantedst the means of knowledge, and hadst nobody to inform thee in thy duty: and he hath shown it so long ago, that the world cannot be at this day to seek how to please God, as if nobody could tell what his mind was. To pass by the former, let it be considered concerning the latter, that they are shrewdly to be suspected to believe no God; or else not to

[h] Matt. v. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 9. [i] 1 Tim. iii. 15.

know what they mean by the name, who are to seek what religion to be of. For no man can be rationally persuaded of the being of a God, and not be persuaded that he governs the world: and if he govern the world, it must be by laws; and if those laws are uncertain, they are no better than none. And if they be made for all his subjects, they must be plain, because many of them understand but little.

It is an easy thing to find what God's will is, if we be but impressed with such a sense of our dependence on him as begets that reverence and fear of him, and that love and affection to him, which easily and naturally flows from the sense of our dependence. God's mind is laid before us; we need only open our eyes and look no further. The way is plain, though it be narrow; the gate is open, though it be strait. You may easier find the way than walk in it, you may sooner see the gate than enter in at it. It is to be feared that they who seek for some new way, find this too strait and narrow which they have been in; and they would have a greater liberty to themselves than formerly their consciences durst let them take. And then the devil may soon show them the way wherein they should walk, and by a new light discover to them the paths of darkness. But I dare say if any man have a mind to live godly, to deny himself, to walk humbly with his God; he need not go to seek any further than this book. There he may behold so much to be practised, that if he will seek no further till he hath done that, I may warrant him from being of the number of any other seekers than those that *seek the Lord continually*, that they may *walk* in *all his commandments blameless*. They are *exceeding broad*, they are to have an influence into the whole life: so that if the doing of those be our end, we need seek for no more, for they will hold us at work all our days.

The third observation proved.

The third observation is, That God's demands are not unequal, or that he doth not exact of us any duty that is hard and rigorous. They are not Draco's laws, cruel and tyrannical: nor the heavy yoke of Moses, grievous, and painful; but the gracious commands of Jesus Christ, the laws that God himself lived by when he was in the flesh: cousin germans to those that rule in heaven. Two things

in the text likewise speak this, besides that which is mainly intended.

First, the prophet calls it good which the Lord shows to us. He requires nothing that is for our harm, or our real damage, or which a man should refuse if he was left to himself, did he rightly understand. And secondly, the question likewise speaks it, *What doth the Lord require of thee?* As if he should have said, What great matter doth he look for? What canst thou except against it? Is it any thing strange and uncouth, that was never before heard of? Did thy mind never give thee notice of it? Is it some monstrous task, that the mind of man could never conceive it, nor think of it? No.

1. God requires nothing impossible, as is apparent from two things which the text suggests to our thoughts.

God exacts not things impossible.

i. He doth not bid men offer their children to him, which perhaps they have not. He doth not bid them buy them, (as the heathen sometime were fain to do,) for perhaps they are not able. He doth not exact of men (as the prophet before said) *a thousand rivers of oil*, which a whole town or country cannot afford: but, as Moses saith, *the commandment is not hid from thee, neither is afar off: it is not in heaven that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up to heaven and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it*[k]. He doth not bid us all be scholars, and understand all the books of nature. He bids us not to climb up to heaven, and follow the chariot of the sun, and track the paths wherein the moon walks, and number all the heavenly bodies, things which all men's parts and employments will not reach: but he saith plainly, *Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with God;* things within us, which we know well enough he requires of us. And secondly, you may observe that he saith, *What doth the Lord require of thee, O man?* He doth not bid us make other men do justly, and love mercy, &c. He doth not command us to quell other men's passions, but our own; nor govern other men's desires and lusts,

[k] Deut. xxx. 11—14.

but those that are in ourselves. He exacts not of us their duties, whether it be of our children or servants, or any such impossible task, but our own duty toward God and them. When we have done what we can to make them understand and do their duty, then, saith the scripture, God will not require their blood at our hand; but the soul that sinneth, that shall die, and every soul shall bear its own iniquity.

2. He requires nothing unreasonable, for he speaks to us here in the text as men. He bids us only love a greater good more than a less; a better thing more than a worse; God more than the world; the soul more than the body. To do to others as we would they should do to us; to provide for a long life more than a short; to lay up treasure where non can take it away. He never bids us pray, unless we be in need; nor give thanks, but when we have received a blessing. Do but show that you are not in perpetual want, and he will not ask you to *pray without ceasing*. Do but make it good that you receive not innumerable blessings every day, and he will not require you to give solemn and hearty thanks. Do but show that it is better to be drunk than to be sober, and you may take your fill; that a man can write better than God, and then you need not read his word; that all time is your own, and then you may sit at home or recreate yourselves on the Lord's day. And so you may say of every other duty: not one of them is unreasonable to be expected from us; for he commends the best things to us, and proffers a good to us before an evil, or a greater good before a less.

Nor things unreasonable.

3. Nothing that is unnatural. I do not mean to corrupt nature, for so the most reasonable thing that is may seem unnatural; as to provide for our parents, to keep our word when it is to our damage, &c. But to nature as God made it, and to renewed nature, God requires nothing that is contrary. It cannot be unnatural to trust God more than our riches; to live by faith in God; to depend upon his promises; yea, to leave all for his sake, and to trust him with our lives as well as our fortunes; to trust him till another world, as well as in this. That which seems the hardest thing in religion is, to lay down our lives if God call for them; to forsake every thing, rather than break the least of his commandments: and yet there is nothing unnatural in it, but it is

Nor things unnatural.

according to the right constitution and nature of our souls to let him dispose of our lives and goods, who gave them to us; to trust him with them, and with ourselves. It is not unnatural to give our lives to the God of life; especially since he hath promised a better life, which makes it infinitely reasonable, and, so far from being unnatural, that it is desirable to do and suffer what he pleases. Ἀφοβία μεγίστη τὸ φοβεῖσθαι τοὺς νομούς[1], 'nothing puts us so much out of all fear as to stand in the fear of the laws.' And nothing puts us in such possession of ourselves as to give ourselves to him.

A caution.

But you must not think that when I say it is thus good, there is nothing in it that is harsh and sour; for as the worst things may be grateful, so the best things may be unsavoury to a bad palate. To the flesh these things will not seem good till it be tamed and subdued, and then even the body will think itself bettered by them. Many sorts of poison are sweet in the mouth, and many good medicines are as bitter. Many sins are pleasurable in the acting, though they be rank poison, bitterness and gall when they are gone down and swallowed into the conscience: and, on the contrary, many things are uneasy and distasteful, which afterward yield the rarest delights and the greatest benefits. We must not think that our duty is such that we shall find no labour, no reluctance in it. No, it is not so easy as to eat our meat, or drink our drink; but being spiritual, it will find resistance from the flesh, and we must do some violence to that at the first for our soul's good. And then when we are used to our duty, it will be as natural to us as to eat; and though to put forth such acts of obedience may not be so easy as to go to a feast, yet in the acting they will be no less sweet than our meat and drink.

No man then shall dare to plead his want of power to do God's commands.

And if God require no unequal thing, let no man think to plead his own inability to do God's commands. Why should God give us a charge, if it were impossible to be kept? what good or wise master would require tasks that can never be performed? And besides, is it not as possible to forbear sin for God's sake, as out of reverence to a person whom thou fearest? Canst thou not as well do what God commands as what a friend

[1] Synes. in Epist. [Epist. 2. p. 160 A.]

enjoins? Canst thou not as well forbear to be drunk, when none but God sees, as thou canst when the magistrate or minister is in company? And if thou canst be sober to-day, then why not to-morrow also? If for a week thou canst give thyself to reading and prayer, then why not for a month, and so for a year, and so for ever? If thou canst be silent and hold thy tongue, why canst thou not keep from oaths and evil language when thou speakest? And for other matters that are higher, if thou canst do these lower even by an ordinary grace, why canst thou not do them by the mighty power of God's holy Spirit? If a man can abstain from much evil by himself, then why should he not be able to do good through God? There is no man shall have this pretence for himself at the day of judgment, that he was unable to do what he knew, for then it will appear to all others and himself also that he could have done more than he did. God required many things within himself; and for the rest, the Spirit of God that moved him to them would have assisted him in them. Yea, even now it appears to men's own consciences that they can have no such excuse; for that is the fourth observation,

The fourth observation proved.

That men's own consciences will speak against them, if they do not what God requires. This is but a deduction from what hath been said, and is plainly also supposed in the text. For, first, you have seen that men have a full knowledge of their duty. They need not be told it; but the question only being asked, it is supposed they can readily make an answer. Or being named, it need not be proved, their own hearts instantly giving an assent. And therefore, secondly, they must needs witness against themselves: for as they know what they ought to do, so they know when they do not as they ought. And they know without any information, so that if you do but ask the question, they are sufficiently reproved of their negligence. And so, thirdly, they will condemn themselves; for it is contrary to the mind to approve of that which it knows it ought not to have done. As it is a witness against itself in matter of fact, so it will be a judge, and condemn itself as to matter of right. And this is a great deal more than the devil can do against any man of us. For though he may inform and accuse, yet he cannot sentence or

condemn. And if a man's own conscience was clear, he need not fear all his plaints, all the bills that he is able to put in against him. But the conscience is not only informer, and accuser, and witness, but judge also, and it sentences and condemns us: and that, first of all, as unjust to God, and secondly, false and cruel to ourselves. For there was a debt owing unto God, and therefore we were unjust to him in not paying of it; and our own consciences told us of it, and therefore we were treacherous, false, and barbarous unto our souls, in violating their light, and acting contrary to those known principles that are within them. They will always be telling us of it, they will lash us with everlasting torments, and after they have, being their own judges, they will turn executioners and tortors likewise of themselves. So that every wicked man is worse than a devil to himself, and he carries his own hell about with him.

The danger of sinning against our conscience.

And therefore every one of us had need take heed how we render ourselves guilty before God: for he need but send to our own souls and rouse them up, and they will become our greatest tormentors. As we set ourselves against God, so will God set ourselves against ourselves. And as we are ready to impeach him of hardness and severity, so shall we most miserably indite ourselves of cruelty and hard-heartedness to our own souls. And as we are apt to count him unreasonable in his demands, so shall we accuse ourselves of unreasonableness; and our souls shall fall out with themselves as they did with him. Such a confusion doth sin make in the world and in ourselves. When we cease to be friends with God, we shall never after be friends with our own souls: when peace is broken with Heaven, all the world is disturbed, and there is peace with nothing, no not with our own minds. Therefore, as we love ourselves, let us endeavour to live in all good conscience before God. Let us not do the least evil, for to avoid the suffering of the greatest evil; and let us not neglect any good, for the purchasing of the best good the world affords. Take the heathen man's counsel, which it is a shame Christians should not follow: Ζημίαν αἱρεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ κέρδος αἰσχρόν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἅπαξ ἐλύπησε, τὸ δὲ διὰ παντός[m]. 'Choose any loss, rather than a dishonest gain; for that will

[m] Chilo, apud Laert. [i. 3. § 2.]

trouble thee once, but this for ever.' It cannot be long before thou feelest that *occultum flagellum*, that 'hidden whip,' the cords of which thou art continually twisting for to lash thyself; and though it scourge thee with a silent stroke which nobody hears, yet it will make thee cry and roar in an eternal misery. Then thou that wouldst not do justly to others shalt do justice upon thyself; and thou that lovedst not mercy shalt be able to show none to thyself; and thou that behavedst thyself proudly and contemptuously against God shalt seem the vilest creature in thy own eyes, and not have so much comfort as to conceive a good opinion of thyself.

But that all this which hath been thus briefly discoursed may more fully and clearly manifest its truth, pass we to the fifth observation, which is mainly intended;

The fifth observation.

That the duties which God requires of man are *justice*, *mercy*, and *humble walking before him*. These three are the things which I say are so plain, so good, so necessarily incumbent upon us, that our consciences cannot deny their obligation. These are the pandects that contain all the laws whereby we are to live; or rather, they are the brief, the summary of all those laws. God hath at large delivered his mind, and shown his will in the Bible; but sometimes he doth epitomize it, and contracts the sum of our duty into a few commands, which are as it were the quintessence and heart of the whole. The Hebrew doctors observe, that there are in the law of Moses six hundred and thirteen precepts. All these (say they) David comprehends in the compass of eleven, Psalm xv. The prophet Isaiah again brings them into a smaller compass, and reduces them to six heads, which you may read in Isaiah xxxiii. 15.[n] In Micah they are more compacted into three, naming this place which I am discoursing of. In Isaiah again they are brought to two, *Keep ye judgment, and do justice*[o], (though our Saviour hath better epitomized them, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c., and thy neighbour as thyself.*) And then

Our duty is sometimes reduced to a few heads in the holy Scripture.

[n] V. Gemara in Maccoth, cap. 3. [apud Martin. Pug. Fid. part. iii. dist. 3. cap. 12. §. 4. p. 805.]

[o] Isa. lvi. 1.

comes the prophet Amos, and he thrusts all into one, *Seek ye me, and ye shall live* [p]. But the prophet Habakkuk comes after and does it better, (according to some of their opinions,) saying, *The just shall live by faith* [q], which last place is much cited by the apostle St. Paul, and you see what is the sense of some of the Hebrews concerning it; that it is a compendious manner of speaking, and includes in its comprehension all that which God speaks in other places. Thus much false Christians might learn of their enemies, that faith is not such a lean and meagre thing as they make it, but is full of obedience to all God's will. And according to this notion, I must look upon this part of my text as expressing in a few words that which we must seek for at large in other parts of holy writ, as representing to us our whole duty toward God, and towards all men, yea and towards ourselves also. For the opening of which, three things may be expected to be distinctly handled. 1. What it is to *do justly*, to *love mercy*, and to *walk humbly with God*. 2. That God requires these things of us. 3. That they are good, and it is no unkindness in God to exact them. But for brevity sake I will do all these three together, and as I show what is meant by doing justly, &c., subjoin some arguments for their being due to God, and likewise good to us.

What it is to do justly.

To *do justly* is to give every one that which is his own. And it contains in it all the duties of the second table, especially of the eighth Commandment. Sometimes *justice* or *righteousness* is taken largely for all religion. Sometimes more strictly for our duty toward our neighbour, as to matters of right. And sometimes most strictly for the duties of the eighth Commandment, to defraud no man, to withhold from none what we owe them; nor rob them, or take away from them that which they have in their possession. And here it may possibly be taken in the strictest sense, so that all the rest of those commandments must be included in the phrase of *walking humbly with God*. But if it be extended to all of them, then by virtue of the fifth commandment, to *do justly* is to give our parents due honour, whether they be natural, civil or spiritual. And in respect of the sixth, it is to

[p] Amos v. 4. [q] Hab. ii. 4.

preserve the life of our neighbour, and to have a care that we injure him not in his being. In reference to the seventh, it is to preserve his just relations, and not to touch them, or cause the violation of their faith to him. And in reference to the eighth, it is to preserve his estate, and not meddle with his goods. And the ninth requires that we preserve his good name, and not defame him, nor do any prejudice to his credit, no more than we would to his estate. And by virtue of the tenth, we are to moderate our very desires, so as not to envy to him that which is his, and long to have it in our possession. And thus in general I may give you some remembrances of this part of our duty:

1. That we must not withhold from any man his due, if it be in our hands. Whether it be due by our promise, or by his labour; by his trust reposed in us, or by our offence against him; for we are bound in this last case to make satisfaction and reparation to him.

2. We must not take from any man that which is his own, whether in his or any other man's possession. Neither by our words, as through lying, false swearing, &c.; nor by our deeds, as stealing, robbing, or any other ways.

3. And we must not desire or covet that which is another man's, nor look with an evil or greedy eye upon any thing that he enjoys. For this is justice in our souls, as the other two are in our outward actions: and it is this base covetous and having disposition which makes men that they cannot forbear such violent actions.

Now how plain is all this to be understood, and how meet is it to be done! What injustice do you find in God, for requiring justice at your hands? The very definition of this act is to give to every one their due, or letting men have what is their own. And if it be reasonable in others towards you, then it is most reasonably required of you towards them. And if you may demand it from them, and they from you, then much more may God demand it of you all. The relation that is between us and others requires it of us; and God made both them and us, and those relations; and therefore he may require this of thee, O man, whosoever thou art. He doth but bid thee do what any heathen will tell thee is thy duty, if thou ownest thyself to be

It is no injustice to require it of us.

a man, and intendest to live among men, and not to be destroyed as a beast of prey. Aristotle or any lawgiver could not call for less justice than God doth; only God requires it in words of greater force to engage us to it. It is well observed by a most learned divine of our own[r], that what Aristotle calls τὸ οἰκεῖον ἀπονέμειν, 'to give a man is own,' the holy apostle calls ἀποδοῦναι τὰς ὀφειλάς, *to render him his dues or debts*[s]. Both these words of the apostle are more significant than those of the philosophers, which may teach us that Christianity requires under stricter bonds that which morality demands. For ὀφειλή, a 'debt,' or 'that which is owing,' is more expressive of our obligations than τὸ οἰκεῖον, 'his own,' or 'his property.' We are debtors unto justice, and stand bound to our neighbours by our 'own act and deed,' so that he may soon prove it is his own which he requires. And then ἀποδοῦναι, to 'render or restore,' is more full of justice than ἀπονέμειν, to 'give or distribute.' For it signifies the returning of that which we have borrowed of our neighbour; and therefore he saith in the next verse, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* Every act of justice is but the paying of what we have received; for he doth justice to us, and therefore we owe it back again to him. We do but pay him with his own coin, and discharge that duty which not only God, but he hath obliged us unto. Not that it is lawful to cozen them that cozen us, and thus to render men as we receive; for that is but to be as dishonest as they who would not pay us that debt which we took ourselves to be bound in unto them. And there is a public justice likewise to which we owe much; for it preserves our estates, and from thence we look for satisfaction for our wrongs.

And he is some savage wild creature, who sees not all this to be good. For our neighbour, no question, it is good that we should do justly; and if for him, then for us: for in his welfare our own welfare consists, we being both members of the same body; and in his honesty is our safety. And therefore they that will not be honest themselves would have all men else honest, and think that it is the best thing in the world that all

And it is very good for us.

[r] D. Sanderson, Serm. in 1 Pet. ii. 17. [Serm. iii. ad Aulam, §. 9. Works, vol. i. p. 59.]

[s] Rom. xiii. 7.

should deal justly with them. But how can any man expect that from another which he will not vouchsafe to him? Or by what reason is it that we must engross all good to ourselves, and let our neighbour have none of it? If we would have the monopoly of it, we shall never purchase it, for men will destroy such wolves and foxes that raven for themselves, and do no good at all to others. Or if they do not spy their subtlety, but it is covered in darkness, God will tear the prey out of their mouths, and the righteous Lord will make them know that it is bad to do unrighteously. For commonly we see that they who do wrong to others are in themselves or posterity laid open to the violence of such like unjust persons. And so the Eastern fable taught the people, that the wolf having stolen a pig, was met withal by a lion, who took it away from him, and it was a wonder that he was not himself also torn in pieces[t]. That which was not well gotten could not well thrive; and men might consider in the midst of a violent act, that if they can find in their heart to be dishonest, there may be others in the world of the same mind, that will make no conscience to deal with them as dishonestly. I am very much pleased therefore with the Northern proverb, that "it is good sport to be honest:" the world may smile a while upon men in their dishonest gain, and they may laugh at their good fortune, but *the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment*[u]. If a man have but a little that is justly gotten, it is a great treasure; for he gains a good conscience, which will continually feast him. But wickedness, though it be sweet in the mouth, yet it is the *gall of asps* within: and besides, the riches that such a man swallows down, *he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly*[x].

Good for whole kingdoms as well as for private men.

And it is no less good for whole nations than it is for private men to do justly, for they subsist by it, and it is the pillars of government, of peace, and tranquillity. Every act of justice is as a pin in a building, which joins the parts of it faster together, and maintains the entireness of the whole body. And when any man defrauds another, he pulls out a little pin, loosens the joints, and doth what he can to bring all things to ruin. Either men become enemies to each

[t] [The fable is that of Locman, p. 24 of the Latin translation by T. Erpenius, 4to. Lugd. Bat. 1636.] [u] Job xx. 5. [x] Ver. 12, 14, 15.

other, and are in a state of war when wrong is committed; or else they stand at a distance, and will have nothing to do with each other any more: and both ways society is dissolved; that communion which is the foundation of commonwealths is overturned.

But see what the Scripture saith in all these cases; where many blessings are promised to just men, and curses are threatened upon all others. *The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; but he blesseth the habitation of the just*[v]. A curse indeed, enough to make a whole volume, for Zachary saw a *flying roll*, a sheet of parchment as large as our books, writ on both sides with woes against the thieves and false swearers, Zach. v. 3, 4. A place which I have taken notice of in the foregoing papers, and I will add by the way here, that a *flying roll* may not only denote the speed which that book full of curses would make to come upon them; but also that the volume was open and spread forth, so that all might read it. For you know, when a sheet is not rolled up, but hangs expanded, it is moved by the wind, and flies as it were up and down in the air. Believe therefore the same wise man, who saith, *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation*[x]. If you compare this verse with the second, it will seem likely that by a *righteous man*, he means one who *doth justly*, and thereby takes a course to settle himself; and by a *wicked man*, an oppressor, who may soon lose all that he hath unjustly got. Unrighteousness you see will be our own loss, more than any other man's; and therefore to do justly, is not more another's good and gain, than it is our own. And so you may read, Prov. xi. 11, xiv. 34, where he shows the general concernment of cities and nations, of lesser and greater communities, in righteous dealing. King Canutus knew this so well, that when he had condemned many malefactors, and one desired it might be considered he was of the blood-royal, and have some favour; he said, So he shall, let him be hanged upon an higher gibbet[y]. That justice which he observed in punishments, if all would observe in their promises, covenants, contracts, and all their dealings and intercourses, they would

[v] Prov. iii. 33. [x] Prov. x. 25.

[y] [The anecdote probably refers to the punishment of Edric by Canute for the murder of Edmund Ironside, in the details of which the chroniclers differ.—Matt. West. 206; Brompton, 908; Hen. Hunt. 208; Knighton, 2318.]

banish suits, quarrels, wars and tumults, out of the world. Peace would grow and flourish on this root; and how great a good that is, we in this nation by this time may have learnt[z]. This would make our swords rusty, and our armour good for nothing but to hang up in our houses, and show that we were once miserable. All that the thunder and lightning of our guns telleth us is the world's injustice, from which we must either be defended or delivered: let this cease, and they will all be silent. This will put out the fires which nothing else will quench, and bury the enmities which else will always be maintained. It was a wise and a true answer, (with which I will conclude this,) which Agesilaus gave to one who asked him whether fortitude or justice were the greater virtue, *οὐδὲν ἀνδρείας χρήζομεν ἂν πάντες ὦμεν δίκαιοι*: 'we should have no need of your valour, if we were all just[a].'

What it is to love mercy.

As to do justly is to give to men that which is their own; so to love mercy is to give to others that which is our own. Or rather justice renders and mercy gives to men that which is their due. For that which is ours may be due to others who are in need, though not by man's laws, yet by God's. And there is a kind of justice even in mercy, insomuch that, in scripture language, righteousness frequently signifies giving of alms, and a just man signifies one that is good. But as these two stand distinguished, justice requires that every man have his due; and mercy, that he have what is not by mere justice due to him. Three sorts of men there are, say some of the ancient Hebrews, and every one of them hath his peculiar saying. The first is the unjust, and he saith, "That which is mine is mine, and that which is thine is mine." The second sort is the just, and his saying is, "That which is mine is mine, and that which is thine is thine." The third sort is the good or merciful, and he saith, "That which is thine is thine, and that which is mine is thine[b]." He will not take away from others what is his, but give to them what is his own; and the apostle is thought by some to allude to this distinction of men, when he saith, *Scarcely for a righteous man*

[z] Psalm lxxxv. 10.

[a] [Apophthegm. Lacon. p. 213.]

[b] [Pirke Avoth. p. 469. inter Opusc. Græc. Vet. Sent. per J. C. Orellium; apud Gaulmyn, in Vit. Mosis, p. 330; et Plantavit. Floril. Rabbin. § 338. p. 57.]

will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die[c]. I should prolong this discourse beyond its just bounds, if I should mention all the particular acts of mercy: let it suffice therefore in general to tell you,

1. That sometimes we must let go our own right, and those dues which in justice others are bound to pay unto us. Strict justice may sometimes be a kind of injustice, i. e., it may overthrow the ends of justice, which is, preserving of human society. And all will confess that it is so hard, severe and oppressive to the parties of whom it is exacted, that what mercy requires in this case is very much like the demands of justice. This bids us to make abatements sometimes of what in strictness we might ask, and to deal favourably and gently with all men. Where men have had great losses, and their estates are much broken, we must not hold them rigorously to agreements. Neither must we take all advantages of our brethren, nor seize on a mortgage when they cannot pay; nor sue a bond, nor turn a man out of his lease, when he misses his day. And a thousand suchlike cases there are, wherein mercy calls for that which is named kindness and favour.

We must not always exact our due.

But secondly, as we must not always require what is our own in other men's hands, so we must always give to the poor what is in our own hands. We must relieve the distressed, defend the fatherless, plead the cause of the widow, visit and help the sick, deliver the prisoner and captive; and be so far from requiring in some cases what others owe us, that we must give them more to support their feeble estate withal. Many actions of mercy there are to men's souls, which I shall not mention, but in general tell you, that under this word are included all actions of charity, pity, and compassion toward our neighbour. And we must charge ourselves with them, as we do with actions of justice. And be as careful not to withhold supplies from the poor, as we are not to steal, and not to say them nay when we are able, no more than we must lie to our brother: and we must make provision for them, and do them good, as diligently as we watch over ourselves, that we take not away from them, nor do them evil.

We must give to others what they need.

[c] Rom. v. 7, 8.

The covetous is abhorred of God, as well as the thief; the unmerciful, as well as the murderer. And therefore a man must not content himself that none can charge him with doing wrong; but his light must shine before men, and he must give alms of such things as he hath. And likewise he must deal fairly with all men, and not with a griping hand, and an overreaching head; and he must be ready to forgive all them that have trespassed against him, and not hold them to over strict satisfaction.

Too many think it sufficient to be just; but it is hard so to be, if we be not merciful.

There are many blind worldlings, many moles and earth-grubbers, that pudder and scrape in the earth all their days, and they do not invade any of their neighbour's possessions, nor encroach upon their ground, but content themselves in their holes: and yet they do no good at all, nor bring any benefit to the world. They seem not so bad as rats that eat our meat, and clothes, and books; but yet none is the better for them: and at last many are much the worse. As the mole, though she take nothing away from our ground, but seems to raise it higher; yet in time she destroys it all by her hills which she casts up: so these men, though they do not plainly pick men's pockets, and rob them; though they raise fair houses, and seem to make towns more splendid where they live; yet they secretly work out all the old inhabitants, and make it all their own dwelling. They are as the spleen in the body, and draw all they can from others to fill their own bags; and the hard conditions which they hold men unto, with their obstinate refusal to relieve a decaying person, undoes many round about them.

God justly requires mercy of us.

But that it is meet we should do otherways, appears not only from that great rule of our actions, *to do to others as we would they should do to us*, were their condition ours, and ours theirs; but also from the great mercifulness of our God to us. We stand in need every day of God's mercy, both in giving and forgiving; and why should it be thought hard that he bids us relieve the needy, when we ourselves are in so much need, and he thinks not much to relieve us? But besides, if it be hard for us to part with a little out of abundance; how hard is it to them, to want not only the abundance, but that little! And again, since God

gives all to us, he may entail it upon us and our heirs on what conditions he pleases; and what great matter is it, if this be one, that we give some of it away to others? And truly this is one of the things that makes it good; for there is no such way of saving and preserving as by giving: and no such way of losing as by unmerciful saving. This cuts off the entail from many a fair estate, that the last lord of it was a covetous miserable wretch. And besides, God bids us here love mercy, which we could not do if it were not good. Neither will God tie us, as you heard, to such hard conditions as to delight in our own mischief. And therefore all ingenuous heathens have counted it a piece of singular contentment to do good, and some looked upon it as a becoming little gods in the world. This, if any thing, likewise, will draw the love and affection of others to us, not to say their petty adorations. A great light and splendour such actions cast abroad, when they are not done out of popularity and vainglory, but out of love to mercy, and to God the Father of mercies; and they get a man honour without desiring of it, or taking any other pains to seek it. And there is not only pleasure and credit in this noble virtue, but as much profit as heart can desire. It must needs be good, because it is called in Scripture *doing of good:* and though the phrase properly imports the good of others, yet let me tell you, we hereby bestow no small boons upon ourselves. God so loves it, that he loves those that love it, and hath promised great rewards to them and theirs, in this world, and in the world to come. *With the merciful he will show himself merciful*[d]. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*[e]. *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth: the liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself*[f]. *His righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour*[g]. This is an argument upon which I might dilate till night: for there are no less treasures for the merciful man, than the rich man hath of wealth in his house; yea, infinitely more, for he lays up his treasure in heaven, where God hath bound himself to pay him with usury and increase.

Mercy is for our good.

And now for the third thing, what it is to *walk humbly*

[d] Psalm xviii. 25. [e] Matt. v. 7. [f] Prov. xi. 24, 25. [g] Psalm cxii. 9.

with God: it is not fit that I should give you much more than the heads of discourse, unless I intended of a sermon to make a treatise.

What it is to walk humbly.

First therefore, think lowly of thyself, which is a great part of this duty. So the word *humbly* is often taken, especially in compare with God, from whom we and all we have do come, and on whom they continually depend. As thou givest to others their own, yea thine own; so assume to thyself no more than is thine own: yea, call nothing that is good thine own; but acknowledge God in all, be it riches, or beauty, or learning, or health, or grace itself. When thou exercisest justice and mercy, do not take it to be a matter of high desert; but think that thou only dost as becomes a man, and thou dost thyself a great deal of right and kindness in it: and what thou dost, it is from God, who gives both the will and ability to do it.

To think meanly of ourselves.

2. Mourn and lament over thyself. Think lowly of thyself, when thou art at the best; and then mourn over and bemoan thyself, that thou art no better. This is called in Ahab *humbling of himself;* which though it were but outward, yet was answered by an outward blessing. And thus they are joined together, James iv. 9, 10.

Bewail thy imperfections.

3. Readily subject thyself to all God's commands. He that truly mourns and is sad that he is no better, strives most sincerely, and uses all means to be as good as he can. His heart rises not against any of God's commands, he thinks nothing too strict which God enjoins. He willingly gives up his liberty and choice to God, which is an act of the greatest humility imaginable. *Not my will,* Lord, *but thy will be done,* is not only his language, but the sense of his soul. And what greater subjection can there be in a man than to have no will of his own, but to part with it unto another? This makes all sin so abominable, because it bids defiance to God, and disowns in a proud sort his authority: and this makes goodness so acceptable, because it makes us lay ourselves at God's feet, to know his pleasure, and debases us to nothing. We claim no power over ourselves, or any thing that we have, own no right at all to dispose of any thing as we please, when we *humbly walk with God.*

Obey God's commands.

4. And in particular, we must reverently worship him by all

Worship him with reverence.

acts of prayer and praises. *O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker*[h]. A Psalm not unfitly appointed to be used heretofore in the beginning of Divine service, to remember us how reverently and solemnly we should address ourselves unto God's worship. And let me tell you this, that it becomes us to enter into the place where we tender our services unto God, with more humility and composedness than ordinarily now appears. It is not a sign of a good spirit, to come either with an haughty and high look, or with a careless and garish eye, much less laughing and talking, when we are going to humble ourselves and fall down before the Lord. But we ought to enter even into the place where we intend to perform our obeisance to him, with reverent thoughts, submissive looks, and a bashful countenance, as being deeply sensible of our unworthiness to approach into his presence. There is a tradition among the Hebrews, that David learnt but two things of Achitophel, and he made him his master, his friend, and his privy-councillor for them. And the one of them was by way of reproof, because he came into the school, the house of teaching[i] (בית המדרש), with his head lifted up, which had the face of rashness and pride in it. Oh that men would now profit so much by reproofs, and count them their friends that tell them of their faults; and that they would learn likewise to come into the house of God with more becoming reverence in their faces than ordinarily they do!

5. Meekly submit to God's corrections. As thou must not choose thy work, so neither must thou choose thy usage. All impatience comes from pride, and our murmurings are bred by too goodly thoughts of our own selves. Alas! what are we more than many others, that we should expect to be so tenderly handled? What great matters can we do with that health, or riches, or credit, which we would never have to absent themselves from us? Nay, what condition is bad enough for such wretches? What a wonder is it that such unprofitable creatures are not banished out of the world! If we thought thus ofttimes with ourselves, we should become very humble; i. e. meek, patient, and contented under

Exercise meekness in afflictions.

[h] Psalm xcv. 6.

[i] V. P. Fagium in Pirk.Av. cap. 6. [p. 136.]

all that befalls us. One act of humility begets another; and he that thinks meanly of himself will not be angry that he is afflicted.

Subjection to our governors.

6. Be peaceable and obedient to governors, who are gods in the world, and to whom God hath bidden us that we should subject ourselves. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, &c.*[k] It is an high act of pride and insolency, to control the authority that is over us, and to set up our own wills above God's vicegerents. For it is a great contempt of the majesty of God, whose image they more remarkably bear, and with whose effigies they are more visibly stamped than other men. We must alway therefore do what they command us, or else suffer what they inflict upon us. And if we choose the latter, we must suffer as meekly and peaceably as if it was an immediate hand of Heaven upon us. For if Solomon say of every man, that *proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath*[l]*;* then much more is he to be branded in the forehead for a man superlatively proud, who cannot endure to be touched in body or estate, but it casts him into the highest inflammations of anger, even against the highest powers.

Temperance and sobriety in the use of what we enjoy.

7. Moderately and temperately use God's mercies. The word σωφρονεῖν, which signifies 'to be temperate,' is applied frequently to the mind, in opposition to pride and self-conceitedness. For sobriety indeed proceeds from an humble sense that nothing is ours, but all that we have is God's; and that we have right to nothing but what he gives, and as he allows. And all drunkenness, wantonness, and whatsoever other intemperance there is in the world, is commonly the issue of an haughty, giant-like temper of spirit, which makes men look upon themselves as lords and owners; and all creatures as their proper goods, which are perfectly at their disposal. The *crown of pride*, and the *drunkards of Ephraim*, are both names for the same persons[m]. For besides that such men have no regard to a supreme Being, they look big upon all their inferiors; and no beasts likewise do kick more against the reproofs or counsels of God's prophets than such as they.

[k] 1 Pet. ii. 13. [l] Prov. xxi. 24. [m] Isa. xxviii. 1, 3.

8. Modestly expect a reward from God, when thou hast done these and all other good actions. That word which is here in my text rendered *humble*, doth frequently occur in the Jewish writings for shamefacedness and modesty. And therefore I add this at the last, as the top of all, that when we have done all our work with the greatest strictness, yet we must look for our wages from mere mercy and benevolence. This humility is the greatest ornament, and the fairest of all the graces in God's sight. We never look more beautiful than when we blush at our own defects, and dare not cast our eyes confidently upon God. The highest act of faith is a piece of the lowest humility. When we rely most upon God's mercy, we utterly disclaim all our own merits.

Modesty in looking for a reward.

But as that act of faith whereby we cast ourselves on God's mercy is not all the acts of it, but supposes many others foregoing; even so it is in this act of humility, whereby we acknowledge ourselves unworthy to receive any reward from God's hand: it is so far from being all the humility that God requires, that there must precede all the other acts which I have mentioned before this can take its place. Many men can easily disclaim all trust in their own righteousness, because they have none to trust in: but they are truly humble men that are just and righteous, and yet trust not in that for their acceptance with God to salvation. You cannot say that a man is wise, because he holds his peace when he is dumb and tongue-tied: but he is a wise person, who can speak well, and yet silently hearkens. No more can he be deemed poor in spirit, who hath no riches nor treasures in his soul to brag of; but he only who is enriched with knowledge, and faith, and love, and all good works; and yet is lowly in heart, poor in his own thoughts, and acknowledges that he is but an unprofitable servant.

Now all this is but just, because of our dependence on God, his superiority over us, and his excellency above us. On all which when we look, we must say with Job[n], *Now mine eye seeth thee; and therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* And it is no less good than it is just; for, first, He that lies low lies safe. He cannot fall far who stands on the ground; but whether can he fall

The justice and goodness of all this.

[n] Job xlii. 5, 6.

who lies already upon it? We shall not be in danger to tumble down from great hopes and expectations, if we be so humble as to have no high opinion of ourselves and deservings. The lowest valleys are the safest from wind and storms; and God hath promised to preserve the meek, and that they *shall inherit the earth.* Who will harm modest and submissive persons, that had rather put up an injury than do any; that are loving, peaceable, and quiet in the land? None but those against whom no men can be defended. And, secondly, He that lies low is most fruitful. The mountains are commonly barren, and the valleys are most richly laden; *for the Lord resists the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.* And, thirdly, He that lies low is blessed from above with all that is good for him. The less he expects, the more he shall have; the more unworthy he judges himself to be, the more fit he is to have his emptiness filled. The showers that run off from the high heads of mountains run down into the bosom of valleys. Most of heaven's plenty falls into the lowest places; and so do most of God's favours and blessings fall into humble souls. They that behave themselves as it becomes them, in meekness, moderation, obedience, modesty, &c., God will make good his word unto them: *The meek shall eat and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord; they shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid.* He will keep them in perfect peace, in a sweet serenity and quiet of spirit. He will exalt them in due time, and open even the gate of heaven unto them; not to pour down blessings on them, as now he doth, but to receive them up to his blessings. This discourse would swell too much if I should particularly show the goodness of every one of the forementioned acts of humility, and therefore it shall suffice to have given these light touches upon some of them.

Application. Now if these things be so as I have discoursed, then, first, let us begin to put in practice a part of the duty last mentioned, by being deeply humbled for all our sins against these plain and familiar commands. Let every man search into himself how far he hath gone along with the stream; for it is manifest, that covetousness and oppression, hard-heartedness and cruelty, pride and irreligion, have come in like a flood upon us in this

Be humbled for sins against these commands.

nation, and borne many away before them. As for justice, we may take up the complaint of Petrarch concerning the age wherein he lived, that "hunters and fowlers use not greater cunning in laying their nets and snares for wild beasts and fowls, than crafty men do to inveigle and ensnare the simple and plain-meaning people[p]." Or we may say with one of his countrymen, (which is now become a proverb in Italy,) that "by deceit and cunning men live half the year, and by cunning and deceit the other half." And mercy is such a stranger to men's hearts, that we count him a person of great tenderness that will not deceive us at all; and a very merciful creature who will not deceive us as much as he can. So little kindness and good nature is stirring, that we are apt to suspect them of designs who make much of us, and we dare scarce receive men's courtesies. And what is a great deal of our religion, but an humoursome kind of devotion; a proud, self-conceited pleasing of ourselves, with a fastidious contempt of all others? Where is that awfulness in men's countenances when they converse with God; that tenderness of heart at the mention of any of his commands; that bewailing of their sins; that patience, peaceableness, acceptance of the punishment of their iniquities that ought to appear? We may almost say with this prophet in the next chapter, *The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men*[q]. For could there be so much spoil (think you) committed in the midst of us, and no injustice? such estates so quickly gotten, and no covetousness? so much bloodshed, and no hatreds? so many contentions, quarrels, and hot disputes, and no uncharitableness? so many vain opinions, and no pride? such unsteadiness in the ways of God, and no self-conceitedness in men's hearts? such contempt of the ministry and all that is sacred, and no irreligion? We must begin therefore to amend by acknowledging these sins, and seriously bemoaning them, either in ourselves or others.

But our amendment must not end here; nor must we think

[p] ["Non tanto studio, neque tot laqueis venatores atque aucupes feras ac volucres captant, quot versuti homines alios quosque simpliciores; quod si unquam verum fuit, vestra ætate verissimum est."—Petrarch. de Remediis utriusque Fortunæ, lib. ii. dial. 62. opp. tom. i. p. 155.]

[q] Mic. vii. 2.

by blubbered eyes and lamentable groans to draw God to be a party with us in these sins. No, we must sincerely proceed to a practice of all these duties, which the prophet and our own consciences loudly call for; and the rather, because they have been so much laid aside and neglected, or at least, some of them set up to thrust out all the rest.

Amend in all these things.

And first, for *justice;* let us put away all iniquity, if there be any in our hands, and all covetous desires which we find lurking in our hearts. Let every one say as the Psalmist doth, *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*[r]. If thou hast wronged any man, make him satisfaction. Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another. Detain not the wages of the hireling. Let no man go beyond his brother, or defraud him in any thing. Let his relations, and goods, and every thing he hath, be as an holy thing to thee, which thou mayest not lay thine hand upon. We are told of an heathen people who were so just, that if they found any thing in the highway they would not take it up, thinking the owner would come ere long to seek it, to whom it did of right belong[s]. I wish there were but half so much justice among Christians, who not only cozen others when it comes in their way, and have fair opportunities presented, but use all sorts of circumventions, and will go a great way about to seek an occasion to deceive them. It is grown to be an art and a study how to cheat a neighbour; and whereas those heathen boggled at an εὕρημα, (as they called it,) a thing which was found, and thought it an injury to take it up; Christians make no scruple of a ζήτημα, (as I may phrase it,) an injustice which they seek for, and are inquisitive to find ways of bringing it to pass. And sad it is to consider for how little men will venture to displease God, and what a small gain will tempt them to do unjustly. If a man could get all the world by one act of unrighteousness, he would be a great loser by the bargain; but there are such vile and cheap souls, that will not stick for a small sum of

First, be more just.

[r] Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.

[s] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 4. 1. [The people of Byblis in Phœnicia. Nicolaus Damascenus says the same of the Ethiopians. Hist. p. 275.]

money, perhaps for no sum at all, to do not one but many injurious acts to their neighbours. A little consideration (methinks) would amend men in such a matter as this; and the thoughts only of its folly might work a cure upon them without a sermon against it. Fear of losing all might make them careful not to have a farthing that is got unjustly, if they had but so much observation as little children, who use to say, that after they once cheat, they never thrive in their games. I know it is a desire of being rich, and indeed of being rich presently, that thrusts men forward into such base and unworthy courses; but God doth so order it, that nothing more hinders the accomplishment of their desire, than the way they take to attain it. There is a great truth in the Spanish proverb, that "he who will be rich in one year, shall be hanged at the half-year's end." Exceeding greediness may make men do such villainous acts that they cannot be endured, but are brought to ruin by them. But howsoever in the proverb of the wise man there is an infallible verity, Prov. xxviii. 22: *He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.* See also ver. 5. 20, and chap. xx, xxii. Put away therefore all falsehood and guile, all covetousness and violence, if it be but to save the estate that you have, and that you may get more, and have it last longer. But you will consult better for yourselves if you do thus out of obedience to God, and respect to your brethren, as it is a part of that duty which God and man oblige you unto.

And as for kings and princes, they are engaged above all other men to do justly, seeing they are the leaders of the people, by whose examples they are inclined to live, and by whose righteous management of things they live happily. It was a most pernicious maxim, and altogether unworthy of a good man, (as one of his own party in express terms acknowledges,) which pope Clement the Eighth had often in his mouth, viz. that "kings and sovereign princes may do any thing which will make for their profit[t]." And a shame it is to their religion that he could add in justification of this saying,

[t] V. Cardinal. de Ossat. Epist. 66. part. 1. et Epist. 81. "Les roys et autres primes soveraigns se permettoient toutes choses qui tournoient a leur profit," &c. [Epist. 87. ed. fol. 1641. p. 241. dated Feb. 1. 1597.]

that matters are come to such a pass, that it is not at all imputed to them, nor redounds to their dishonour, if they break their faith, forswear themselves, lie, betray their allies, and do any other thing of like nature. But these wicked principles, which he made use of on purpose to persuade the king of France to break his league with England, are most excellently confronted by a golden speech of that cardinal [u] who reports these things, in which all such persons are much concerned. "At the foot of the account," saith he, (speaking of king James his moderation when he came to the crown of England,) you shall find, that the better and more justly any man shall rule, to the honour and glory of God, and to the comfort, profit, and happiness of his subjects, the more assured his estate shall be; the more strong, the more beloved and blessed shall he be of God and men: in which consists the true and lasting grandeur and puissance of kings, and the assurance of their posterity." Nay, Agesilaus had better notions of divine things in this particular than that pope, who, when some told him the great king (i. e. the king of Persia) would have it so, answered, "How can he be greater than me, unless he be more just and more sober?" Upon the mentioning of which, Plutarch gives his excellent admonition; "By justice, as by a royal standard, we should take the measure of men's heights one above another [x]." If we were in a state of war, and one should make a motion to such great persons to do justly, perhaps he might receive such an answer as Antigonus gave a philosopher who presented him with a treatise of this subject; "Thou art a fool to give me now a book concerning justice, when thou seest I am besieging other men's castles, and making war upon their cities:" but when things are settled, and when it is apparent that violent dealing comes upon men's own heads, then sure a man may be believed if he say that there is no other way to thrive, nor can a prince live by any such prosperous doctrine as that of justice and piety. Then sure, if not at other times, one may propose the example of an heathen emperor to them, who was so taken with that saying of

[u] Epist. 177. part. 2. au Mons. de Villeroy. [al. Epist. 346. tom. ii. p. 618.]

[x] Plutarch. in Vit. Ages. [cap. 23.] Δεῖ τῷ δικαίῳ καθάπερ μέτρῳ βασιλικῷ μετρεῖσθαι τὴν ὑπεροχὴν τοῦ μείζονος. [cap. 23.] et in Apophtheg. [p. 190.]

our Saviour's, Matt. vii. 12, that he caused this sentence to be writ in sundry places upon the walls of his palace, "Do not that to another which thou wouldst not have done to thee[y]."

And all under officers and ministers of public business had need hear this doctrine continually sounding in their ears, because it is so contrary to their worldly interests to practise it exactly. When men have power and opportunity to gratify their covetous desires, they will find that they need a very divine power to enable them to deny them. "It is very strange (saith the master of modern eloquence[z]), that the great Turk can entrust his wives to the vigilancy of others, and assure himself their chastity will thereby be conserved; yet that kings know not to whom they may safely encharge their treasures. But the true reason is, for that an honest man is by so much more difficulty found than an eunuch, by how much miracles are more rare than monsters. Great fortitude is requisite to the obtaining of honesty, but the will only suffices to become covetous." And therefore, seeing it is necessary to do some violence to ourselves, to keep us from doing violence to others, such persons have great reason to thank those who will lay their hands daily upon their corrupt affections by holy admonitions and counsels, not only to restrain and fetter, but to slay and mortify them.

And to conclude this: let us all be sure to remember it is not enough to praise justice, and make speeches in its commendation; nor to have some affection to it by convictions in our minds of its reasonableness and profit; but we must do justly, as my text speaks: and all our actions must be conform to the principles which we praise. This I say the rather, because it hath been noted that men of excellent intellectuals have had bad morals: and those who have writ books for the preservation of honesty have not preserved themselves from corruption.

Secondly, let mercy be joined with justice.

Now secondly, for *mercy*, it makes a more special claim to our favour, because we stand so much in need of it every day, if not from other men, yet from God. And it is to be observed that the prophet, though

[y] Alex. Severus. "Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris." Al. Lamprid. [cap. 51.]

[z] Balzack. [Letter xi. to the Lord Bishop of Air, Dec. 28, 1622. p. 18. of Sir Richard Baker's translation. 8vo. Lond. 1655.]

justice is to be loved, yet doth not say, *love justice*, but *love mercy;* because he would recommend it to our dearest affections. For there are more just men than there are merciful in the world; it being easier to give men their own than to bestow upon them what is ours. Oh! to part with this earth, this idol of gold and silver, is a hard lesson: to give to him that asks, to do good to him that doth evil to us, is an harsh saying. But remember what Zaccheus saith, *Not only I restore fourfold to him whom I have wronged; but half of my goods I give to the poor* [a]. Of such a charitable disposition must you be if you hope to go to heaven, and care no more for riches than do your little children. You must not make hard bargains with poor men, nor think every penny overplus too much for them. You must use sometimes to give more than you have agreed for; that so you may be ready and disposed to do an act of charity when the poor call for it. I know it hath been frequently pleaded, that the times are hard and dangerous, and that men's estates are much impoverished. But then (1) they are harder, you may be sure, with the poor, if they be hard with you who are rich. If they make you cry, they make them groan. If they pinch your purse, then they squeeze and drain their very houses. And (2) mercifulness is the way to make them better. When they have made us better and become more charitable, then they themselves will grow better, and become more peaceable. *He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed. He that hath mercy upon the poor, happy is he* [b]. And (3) the worse and more dangerous they are, the less we should be in love with riches, and the more we should give away to them that need. For it is likely we cannot keep them, or by giving some away we may secure the rest. As men that are afraid their goods will be lost by storms at sea give so much in the hundred to assure them; so should we assure our goods and estates with God when the times are tempestuous, by giving him a large sum for his uses. A wiser man than any of us makes the badness of the times an argument unto charity, howsoever now it is a motive to many to shut their hands. *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth* [c]. His meaning is, the time may come when thy treasure shall be taken from thee, and how

[a] Luke xix. 8. [b] Prov. xiv. 21; xxii. 9. [c] Eccles. xi. 2.

much better is it to part with them voluntarily! Thou canst not tell how much danger all thou hast will be in: and therefore it is wisdom to entrust God with it, and give him something in hand, that he may save the rest. And (4) if God do not save thy riches, yet he may wonderfully save thee. For he hath promised[d] to preserve the merciful men in time of trouble and sickness. Or (5) if he take such men away, it is when he intends to destroy a place, and then who would desire to live[e]? If they be taken away from the evil to come, then death doth them a great deal of good, and God is very merciful to such merciful men, in not letting them see the desolation of their country. To all which add, that while we live, we have no more than we do enjoy, and than we give away for God's sake. And there is no less of mercy in forgiving of men, than in giving to them; in passing by the evil they do to us, than in doing good to them. But lest this discourse should proceed to over great a length, I must leave you to judge how much we should love it by what hath been said of this.

And then, thirdly, *for walking humbly with God*, let me only suggest these two things from the word *walk*, which I have not yet taken notice of. First, it signifies more than one single act, and engages us to a continued motion in the ways of humility. Our demeanour towards God must be a life of lowliness, meekness, and patience; a course of contentedness and sobriety, modesty and moderation; a constant series of such actions as I have named. And if we think to come to heaven by taking a step or two in this way, or by fierce running at some times, we shall be but like to a traveller who sits still the most of his day, and thinks to come to his journey's end by some sudden spurts toward night. To maintain a constant sense of our dependence on God; a continual converse with him; and to have a perpetual care in all things to please him, by conforming our wills to him, are things so necessary that we are but nominal Christians without them. And secondly, to *walk humbly* signifies more than an inward persuasion, and denotes something outward that is to be seen by the world. God will not accept of that which people call a good heart, a pious resolution, and right meaning; but he will have us walk before all men in the

And thirdly, humble walking with God be joined with them both.

[d] Ps. xli. 1, 2, 3. [e] Isa. lvii. 1.

way of his commandments, and publicly appear in opposition to the wickedness that is in the world. If we think one thing and do another, the greater is the sin, and the greater will be the condemnation; because we know so well and do so ill.

Not to mention any thing besides that may be included in the phrase, I beseech you put these things in practice. I have persuaded you enough; do but persuade yourselves. All men commend justice, yet they do unjustly. Virtue hath every one's good word, though they live ungodlily. The proud man commends humility; and the covetous man praises charity; and the unrighteous man speaks for honesty. Men compliment with godliness, and they court virtue, but none will have her. She is poor, and will not consent to their base desires; and so though they extol her beauty, they will none of her. So in Italy they have a proverb among the husbandmen, *Laudandos esse montes, sed a planitie non recedendum,* 'commend the mountains, but live in the valleys.' It is fine sweet air that breathes on the top of hills, and affords a pleasant wholesome dwelling; but keep there where most profit dwells, and that is in the bottom. It is sad that men should extend such a proverb as far as heaven, and commend the holy hill of God, and all the graces and pleasures that stand on the top of it; but resolve still to dwell below, and love the things that are beneath better than all those that are above. Yea, though it be a mere dunghill, they will embrace it if be but fat, and will yield them plenty of worldly increase. They like goodness when they consider it alone; but when they consider it with other things, they take their ease and profit to be much better. So Sophocles said, in that advice which too many follow,

These things must be done, and not only praised.

—— Τὰ μὲν
Δίκαι' ἐπαίνει, τοῦ δὲ κερδαίνειν ἔχου[f].

'Praise righteousness, but stick fast to thy gain.' Let it have thy good word, but do as thou seest good for thyself. But I beseech him that readeth these things, that, by what hath been said, he would rise above approbations and commendations of godliness, and heartily subject himself unto the power of it: or if he love a softer word, let him embrace it, and marry himself

[f] [In Æthiop. apud Athen. Deipnos. iii. 34. p. 122 c.]

to it; let the match now be made up, if he be yet but a complimenter in religion, and not really wedded to it.

They must not be divided from each other.

I will only add, that all those three are so linked and chained together, that they are inseparable, and we cannot take one but we must have all. He cannot walk humbly with God who observes not all the rules of justice and common honesty, with mercy also towards men. God will give him no thanks that goes against his conscience and known laws to do him service, (as they are pleased to style it.) No, *μήτε παῖδας*[f], &c. 'Let neither thy children, (saith Plato,) or thy life, nor any thing else, be dearer to thee than justice, that thou mayest have wherewith to answer for thyself when thou comest *εἰς ᾅδου*, into the other world. Else we (say the Laws which he there introduces speaking their part) shall be thy enemies, and more than we, *ἡμέτεροι ἀδελφοι*, our brethren will be against thee: the laws in that world will not courteously receive and treat thee[g].'

And then, on the other side, we cannot be just and merciful to men, unless we *walk humbly* with God. Justice itself should spring from a sense that we are under a Divine law, and are subjects to the heavenly Sovereign. And true godliness is but a piece of justice toward God, as honest dealing in affairs of the world is justice toward men. We do a manifest wrong to God, and deal dishonestly with him, if we detain from him solemn and constant worship of him. We are base cheaters and defrauders, when we let our worldly business, though never so justly managed, rob God of our best thoughts and affections. And what highway robbers then and notorious felons are those who suffer their sports and pleasures, if not their more beastly lusts, to do violence to all religious duties! Many of this sort are so highly injurious to God, that they not only steal all they can from godliness and piety, but they wound and stab it with the sword of their tongues; and if they were able, would strike it dead, as they ofttimes leave it gasping for life. And this they do with an high hand and great insolency; as if those who most humbly submit themselves to all Christ's commands, and are most fearful of doing any wrong to God, were to be esteemed our greatest enemies, and those that should suffer all

[f] Plato in Critone. [p. 54 b, c.]

[g] *Ὅταν ᾅδου νόμοι οὐκ εὐμενῶς σε ὑποδέξονται.* [ibid.]

wrong from men. That noble philosopher I just now mentioned hath a lesson for them as well as for the former, if they will be so just either to God or themselves as to learn it: "In my opinion (saith he) piety and holiness about the service and worship of God is one part of justice; and the other part of it is concerned in the serving of men[h]." Let no man therefore pride himself in this, that he is not liable to the charge of any creature; when God hath so much to say against him for neglect of praying to him, reading his word, praising him for every good thing he receives, if not mocking at all these. And let this be esteemed true excellency, (which we should have the fortitude to maintain in the worst of times,) not to blush at Christian virtues, nor to boast of moral ones.

Let us pray for others, and principally for our rulers, that they may do these things.

3. And when we have done what we can upon ourselves and those under us, then let us pray for others; especially those that rule us, that we may have just, merciful, and religious governors. Our prayers will be the more acceptable for them, when we pray but for that which we do ourselves in our own places; and their justice and goodness will be the more sweet to us, when it is the fruit of our earnest prayers. Let us beseech therefore the great Lord and Governor of the world, who rules the nations in righteousness and truth, that all those who do or shall bear any part in the government of these lands may be such as will take away no man's rights, defend our laws, pity the poor, and not exact great sums merely to support their own greatness. Let us pray that those may rule us who are ruled by their Maker, that will do good even to enemies, walk humbly with their God, be poor in spirit, not given to the vanities and excesses of the world; that will sympathise with a poor nation in its poverty, pity its miseries, not prodigally waste its treasures; and such as will love religion, and make the worship of God reverent, and the practice of all Christian duties had in high esteem.

Such rulers the Lord will love and bless; and both prince and people will feel the blessing that is in them. For so the wisest king that ever was tells us, Prov. xxv. 5, that *if the*

[h] Plato in Euthyphrone, Τοῦτο ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, ὦ Σώκρατες, τὸ μέρος τοῦ δικαίου εἶναι εὐσεβές τε καὶ ὅσιον, τὸ περὶ τὴν τῶν θεῶν θεράπειαν, &c. [p. 12 e.]

wicked be taken from before the king, his throne shall be established in righteousness[i]. And if it be so established, then *the king by judgment establisheth the land,* Prov. xxix. 4. *All the people rejoice when the righteous are in authority; and by a man of understanding and knowledge the state of a land is prolonged,* Prov. xxix. 2; xxviii. 2. That which the bishop of Elvas said to the estates of Portugal after they had restored that family to the crown, which had long been excluded by the Spaniard, is the greatest commendation of a prince to the people's affection next to true piety; "His majesty (said he) doth not esteem those tributes lawful which were paid in tears; and he will not reign over your goods, nor over your heads, nor over your privileges, but over your hearts." He that by such a government as this doth seat himself in the affection of God and his people, *his throne shall be established for ever, and his children are blessed after him*[k]. I will conclude this with the words of the same wise king, which concern every man of us: *He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour*[l]. *By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life*[m].

And when God hath heard these prayers, may we be so wise and happy as to choose such representatives in future times as consist of persons just and righteous, merciful and tender of all men's interests and concernments; and that *walk with God,* not living in any sin; and that *walk humbly* with him, not being puffed up with a conceit of their own godliness: that are neither ungodly themselves, nor call all others ungodly who are not of their mind; that love not those who are bad, nor scorn any that are good; and in brief, that are not swoln with a belief of their own excellencies, nor grown heady and proud in opinions; but men of a sober religion toward God, joined with justice and charity toward man.

The sixth observation.

I shall not exercise the reader's patience any longer about these matters, when I have but briefly opened the sixth observation, which naturally arises from the discourse of the prophet, viz. that these things, *to do justly, to*

[i] See also Prov. xxviii. 15, 16; xxix. 14; xx. 28; Amos v. 14, 15.
[k] Prov. xxix. 14; xx. 7, 8. [l] xxi. 21. [m] xxii. 4.

love mercy, to walk humbly with God, were always more valued by God than sacrifices, or any other bodily (though costly) services. It is the very intent of the man of God in this place to disparage all outward worship, though of God's own appointment, (and much more all their own devised services,) if it were not joined with true purity of heart and piety of life. For there is nothing reaches the soul but these things that I have been treating of; nothing but these conform us unto God, who is a pure Spirit: nothing is everlasting and of an immortal nature but this image of God; and therefore this he would work in us, that we may be blessed. But I need not proceed in this manner to give you the reason of it: you will presently conclude the truth of the observation, if I do but show you first that these are the things which God always required above all the other; and secondly, that all the other things did tend to the advancement of these. You may well expect I should take this method; for your own souls will bid you inquire why God did appoint sacrifices, circumcision, abundance of washings, and other ceremonies, if he was not mightily pleased with them.

Two things to be proved.

Therefore first I shall demonstrate that God was not pleased with sacrifices and things of that nature, separated from justice, mercy, and godliness; but that rather they were an abomination to him, and like the stinking carcase without the soul, when so separated.

Sacrifices not so pleasing as holiness.

1. Look into the times before the law, and you shall see that there is nobody commended for offering sacrifices, or for loving any of these outward shadows, but only for these substantial virtues which my text speaks of. It is said of Enoch, that *he walked with God, and that God took him*[n]; but it is not said that he was very liberal in slaying of beasts, and that he ascended to heaven in the smoke of sacrifices. And it is said of Noah, that *he was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and one that walked with God*[o]; but nothing is there said where he is commended of building altars, and making great store of oblations to God. Though they did these things, and it is recorded of them that they did them; yet their character is not fetched from such

Proved from the times before the law.

[n] Gen. v. 22, 24. [o] vi. 9.

things, nor do you read that God commends them upon their account. And so of Abraham it is said, that he left his own country and *believed God:* and this, saith the apostle, *was accounted to him for righteousness.* His high thoughts of God, his submission to him, his dependence on him, his forsaking all for him, his trusting of life and every thing he had in his hands; his obeying God, and following of him whithersoever he would lead him; and, in short, his absolute resignation of himself, child, and all things else to God's will: these were the acts for which God accounted him his friend. But we do not read that God or the apostle commend him for being circumcised: no, *circumcision* was but the *seal of the righteousness of that faith which he had in uncircumcision*[p]. It did but testify to him that his faith was good and sound, because God hereby took him into a covenant with himself; or it was that mark and outward token whereby God did assure him of his acceptance into a covenant of great blessings for himself and seed, because he had believed on him, and was righteous before him.

And from the times when the law was given.

2. And not to proceed any further to others that succeeded presently after him, but to look to the time of the law: you may observe that the Ten Commandments were given by God before he gave any of the other laws[q]. And likewise you may take notice of the ordinary style of Moses when he speaks of these things, which runs thus; *These are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments*[r], or *Keep his commandments, his statutes and judgments*[s]; the like to which you may read, Mal. iv. 4. In all which places, and many other, *commandments* are put first, which word comprehends the moral and everlasting precepts: and then follows *statutes*, which denotes the ordinances and institutions about God's worship; and after that *judgments*, which signifies the laws about matters of civil right, both which were alterable and not eternal. Yea, the whole book of Deuteronomy (or the Second Law, as the word signifies) seems to be added after the other, to teach them that it was obedience to his voice in all things that God did most regard. And therefore Nazianzen, reckoning up the privileges of the Jews, saith

[p] Rom. iv. 11. [q] Exod. xx. [r] Deut. vi. 1. [s] xxx. 14.

that they had διπλὴν νομοθεσίαν, 'a double giving of the law,' Orat. 13[t], one ἐν γράμματι, 'in the letter,' the other ἐν πνεύματι, 'in the spirit.' Which may be interpreted of that in mount Sinai, and of the other in the plains of Jordan.

3. And so after the law was given, all the people of God understood that the things chiefly intended by him were their inward mortification, their purity and integrity of soul; a spiritual worship, and a life of temperance, sobriety, justice, mercy, humility and all other virtues. To this there are a multitude of places in holy writ that will testify and bear witness. *Hath the Lord as great pleasure* (saith Samuel) *in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*[u]. Saul thought that God was delighted if they feasted him with a multitude of sacrifices, and that nothing distasted him if they had a care not to entertain idols with the good cheer at the altar: and therefore Samuel tells him that God took the greatest pleasure in an hearty obedience to his commands, which was better than all the outward worship that he had appointed; and that rebellion against God's commands was as bad as idolatry, and worshipping of stocks and stones. From the prophet Samuel let us go to Asaph, who lived not long after, and he tells us[x] that God did not hunger after the flesh of beasts and fowl, nor thirst after the blood of bulls and goats: nor did he fall out with them for the neglect of this kind of service; but that which he required of them was to pray to him, and praise him, and perform all their vows and promises to him, which was the best of offerings[y]. And that which he reproves and chides them for was that they hated instruction, and made nothing of all his commands for the regulating of their words, desires and actions[z]. He asks them how they dare be so impudent as to pretend to be in covenant with him, (though they brought him never so many fat sacrifices,) seeing they could not endure any of his counsels, but

And from the succeeding ages.

Samuel a witness of it.

And Asaph.

[t] [Vid. Orat. 29. al. 20. §. 1. tom. i. p. 377.]

[u] 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

[x] Psalm l. 7–9, &c.

[y] Ver. 14, 15.

[z] Ver. 16–18, &c.

were unjust, unclean, liars, swearers, slanderers and backbiters. As long as their evil affections and desires were unmortified, he cared not for the death of so many of his creatures. And so

And David.

you may read the sense of David in the next Psalm: *O Lord, open my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*[a]. There were no sacrifices indeed appointed for murder and adultery, (to which he hath a particular respect,) but they made a man obnoxious to death by Moses his law; yet he saith in general, that God did not delight in burnt offerings, and so his words may be extended further than that one case of his. That which pleased God was holy praises, and the sacrifices of a broken heart and contrite spirit. There may be an allusion to the ceremonial worship in the words *broken and contrite;* the former of which may refer to the sacrifice of beasts, the latter to the perfume that was put before the testimony of the tabernacle of the congregation[b]. And the words may signify as if he had said, that brokenness of heart, and an holy shivering of the spirit in pieces, so that it shall never be set together in the same frame wherein it was before, is far better than the cutting and chopping of the flesh of beasts in pieces. And as spices when they are beaten smell the sweetest, so when your hearts are thus bruised, and laid in their own dust by sincere contrition, it is a more grateful perfume to me than the beaten spices which were called most holy. If you look likewise into Psalm lxix. 30, 31, you shall find that to *praise God with a song, and magnify him with thanksgiving, please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* From

And Solomon.

him pass to Solomon his son, who is of the same judgment; for he saith expressly, that *to do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice*[c]. *Yea, that the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, especially when he bringeth it with a wicked mind*[d]. And therefore in Eccles. v. 1, he bids us be

[a] Psalm li. 15–17. [b] Exod. xxx. 35, 36. [c] Prov. xxi. 3. [d] Verse 27.

more ready to hear (i. e. to obey) *than to offer the sacrifices of fools.* A fool is one that hath a body without a soul: and such a carcase of religion are all sacrifices without obedience; a mere skin and husk of devotion, which God can no more be pleased with than we are with the gifts of a fool, who knows not what he doth. If from thence you pass to the prophet Isaiah, he speaks so fully to my purpose in the first chapter from the eleventh verse to the twenty-first, that I need not gloss upon his words. And chap. lxiii. 1, 2, 3, the Lord tells that people who boasted so much that they had provided him with an house, and furnished his table continually with sacrifices;—I need no house, nor am I beholden to you for a dwelling; for the heavens and the earth are mine. And I tell you there is no man loves me like to him that is poor in spirit, humble and obedient to my word. Though you think that you please me mightily by the large provision you make at my house, believe it, without this contrition, poverty, and holy trembling at my commands, he that kills a whole ox is so far from doing me any service, that it is as bad as an act of murder, (because he is an hypocrite and a base flatterer.) And you may as well bring a dog or a pig to me (which was forbidden by the law to be offered) as a lamb. Swine's blood (which was the most detestable creature among them) is as good meat to me as the very best of your oblations: and you may as well fall down before an idol and bless, as offer to me any incense. For indeed they made God but a great idol, that could not see nor hear their words and actions, much less their hearts and thoughts; and that would be pleased with any thing, and let them use him as they list. In the prophet Jeremiah also the Lord complains that they had not hearkened to his words, nor to his law, but rejected it, vi. 19; and lest they should return to this exprobration, that they had been very obedient in offering of sacrifices, he saith, ver. 20, *To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me:* which is as if he should have said, Though you are at great cost and charges about this outward worship, yet these are not the things that I so much expect: though you fetch me perfumes from foreign places, yet there are things nearer hand that are far more

And all the prophets.

sweet unto me. And he deals more plainly with them, chap. vii. 21–23, &c., saying, *Put your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh, &c.* The *burnt offerings*, you know, were to be wholly consumed in the fire, and the people were to have none of them; but of their *peace offerings* or sacrifices of praise they did eat. Now, saith God, take all if you will; for me, I care not for your burnt offerings: you may eat them yourselves, as you do the rest, seeing you so little regard my other commands. Never think to flatter me with these, for I can be content if you feast upon them yourselves. I am not so greedy of your fat sacrifices as you imagine: no, it was not about them that I spake with your fathers when they came out of Egypt: but this was the thing that I commanded them, that they should obey my voice in all things. But did not they ask leave of Pharaoh (may some say) to go and offer sacrifices in the wilderness? and did not God give them a law about them? Yes, he did speak to them indeed about those things, but they were to be done in conjunction with better obedience: and, comparatively with the other things, he did not command them. It was never intended that these should be their righteousness, and the things that they should above all others perform: but obedience was the chief thing, even in these, that God respected. For so the words of Jeremiah may be understood;—I did not command your fathers merely concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, but the thing I aimed at, even in the appointing of them, was, that they should be obedient to my voice. To all this you may add that famous place cited by our Saviour, *I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings*[e]. I do not remember that the prophet Ezekiel speaks any thing of this matter: which might be, perhaps, because he wrote in the land of their captivity, where sacrifices were not offered. But lest those of the captivity should think, as their forefathers had done, that their sacrifices were the things that he most delighted in, and that therefore he brought them from Babylon that they might offer them to him; he tells them[f], that they had not brought him any sacrifices, nor honoured him with any offerings, since they came to Babylon, and yet he would deliver them: which was a

[e] Hosea vi. 6. [f] Isa. xliii. 23, 24.

sign that those were not the things which he stood so much upon. No; instead of loading and wearying him with their sacrifices, (as their ancestors had done,) they had rather made him serve with their sins, and wearied him with their iniquities; so that it was only for his own name's sake that he blotted out their transgressions, and did not remember their sins[g]. And to conclude, an honest scribe in our Saviour's time acknowledges the truth of all that I have said, when he makes this reply to one of our Lord's answers, *There is one God, and there is none other but he. And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices*[h]. Where we have a full confirmation of the words in my text, and of that also which was said a little before, that these duties contained in the ten commandments are the *first* and *chiefest* of all. For the question of this scribe is, *Which is the first commandment of all?* And our Saviour doth not say, to offer sacrifices, which is neither first nor second neither; but, to love God, he saith, is the prime and chiefest of all, and next to that is the love of our neighbour. I might add the sense of sober heathens[i], who thought that no sacrifice would please God but the oblation of a devout soul to him; and who looked upon these burnt offerings but as a needless butchery, as *πυρὸς τροφὴν*, 'the food of the fire,' and nourishment of the flame: but then I should too much exceed the just bounds of this discourse, considering also that there remains something due to that great inquiry, which is, For what end were they and such like things appointed by God, if they were not very pleasing to him?

2. The truth is, those heathens did commonly stretch this

[g] Isa. xliii. 25.

[h] Mark xii. 32, 33.

[i] V. Hierocl. [Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτελεία τιμὴ εἰς θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. Δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων πυρὸς τροφὴ, καὶ ἀναθήματα ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία.—in Pythag. Carm. Aur. p. 24.] et Porphyr. *περὶ ἀποχ.* [Μᾶλλον τὸ δαιμόνιον πρὸς τὸ τῶν θυόντων ἦθος, ἢ πρὸς τὸ τῶν θυομένων πλῆθος βλέπει.—lib. i. §. 16. p. 62.] Plato Alcib. 2. [Καὶ γὰρ ἂν δεινὸν εἴη εἰ πρὸς τὰ δῶρα καὶ τὰς θυσίας ἀποβλέπουσιν ἡμῶν οἱ θεοὶ, ἀλλὰ μὴ πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν, ἄν τις ὅσιος καὶ δίκαιος ὢν τυγχάνῃ· πολλῷ μᾶλλον, οἶμαι, ἢ πρὸς τὰς πολυτελεῖς ταύτας πομπάς τε καὶ θυσίας.—p. 150 a.] Euseb. l. iii. Præp. Evang. c. 3. [p. 122.]

notion so far as to condemn all sacrifices; some of them out of ignorance of their true use, and others out of false principles which they had imbibed [k]. And therefore (waving other ends, and keeping only to the purpose of my text) I laid down this as a second truth to be proved, that "sacrifices and such-like outward services did tend to keep men from sin, and to advance justice, charity and piety."

Sacrifices tended to promote holiness.

1. And first it seems to me as though there was the very spirit and reason of these three things in the threefold sacrifices that were appointed. Their *sin-offerings*, which were to reconcile withal, may be looked upon as a piece of justice, and to be given by way of satisfaction unto God for the offences and wrongs done unto him: and the *peace-offerings*, as a piece of love and gratitude to God the author of all mercies; and as a piece of charity and kindness to the poor, who in many cases were partakers of them. And then their *whole burnt-offerings* were tokens of their obedience, and humble acknowledgments that he was their great Landlord, of whom they held the land of Canaan, and from whom they received whatsoever they did enjoy.

2. And so, secondly, their sacrifices taught them to consider that they should consecrate and offer themselves unto him, seeing that they were his no less than their sheep or calves which they brought to his altar. These sacrifices, being their tribute which they paid to their supreme Lord, did express that they were tied to him in any services that he would require of them. They could not think that he would be pleased with an ox more than with a man, and that he would hold them excused if they rebelled against him to whom they made these constant acknowledgments. They did not hereby pay their debts, but confess that they were indebted: they were not discharged by these from all obligations, but testified a sense that they and all theirs were engaged to him.

3. And thirdly, they promoted true holiness, as they showed the hatefulness of sin, and the guilt which it brought upon those that did commit it. For what need was there that these poor creatures should suffer for their faults, if God was not much offended by their disobedience? The cries and strugglings

[k] V. Euseb. l. 4. Præpar. Evang. cap. 10 et 14. [p. 147, 150.]

of the beasts might put them in mind what necessity sin brought upon them of suffering, and how cruelly it would use those who continued in it. And it would be easy to show, that there was no punishment threatened for the breach of any of the ten commandments, whether stoning, or strangulation, or cutting of the throat, or burning (for there were but these four), but it was represented in the death of these beasts, which were thrown on the pavement, tied about the throat, slain and burned either in whole or in part upon the altar.

4. And fourthly, these sacrifices and all other outward ceremonies might well teach them how far they ought to keep from all inward defilements, who were to be so remote from all fleshly pollutions. They that were under such a constant discipline of God, and taught by such holy men, could not without a strange neglect be so sottishly stupid as to imagine that God took no care of the soul, who would have the body so clean and pure. If a beast must not have any blemish in it, nor the man that offered it any legal uncleanness upon him; he might easily think that God expected his mind should be holy, and not in a worse condition than his beast or his body. If they were to wash themselves and their sacrifices, then the soul sure was not to be dirty and impure. If they were to be separated from all unclean persons, then much more from bad company. And if they might not so much as eat with a Gentile, then much less might they partake with them in their sins and impieties. I know not what truth there is in the observation of Eulogius[1]; but he wonders why, there being so many clean creatures allowed by God to be eaten in the law, there were only five, (viz. a goat, a sheep, an ox, a turtle and a pigeon,) which were used in sacrifices; unless it had an enigmatical and figurative meaning, to denote our five senses, which we are to purify and cleanse, that we may adhere to God, and be fit to draw near unto him.

5. And therefore, fifthly, we may look upon the law of ceremonies as an hedge to the law of moral precepts, or the ten commandments[m]. Some things, as Aristotle well observes[n], are good in themselves and to be beloved *καθ' αὑτὸ*, 'for their own

[1] Apud Photium in Biblioth. [cod. 230.] p. 887. [p. 286. ed. Bekker.]
[m] סְיָג הַתּוֹרָה. [Vid. Pirke Avoth, pp. 1, 56.] [n] Ethic. l. i. [c. 4. §. 8.]

sakes,' and others are good and lovely διὰ ταῦτα, 'for the sake of the former;' as they are either ποιητικὰ τούτων, 'effective and operative of them,' or φυλακτικά πως, 'in some sort a preservative and guard to them;' or as they are τῶν ἐναντίων κωλυτικὰ, 'hinderances of their contraries,' and forbid that which would destroy them. Now though the things that we are speaking of were not good in themselves, nor had any proper worth in them, as justice, mercy, and humility have; yet they were of this latter sort of goods, and served to maintain these greater things in their sacredness, and to prohibit them from infringing any of the rights belonging unto them. God kept the Israelites at a great distance from violating these commands, by making them observant of lesser injunctions. Their fear of these meaner offences was intended as a guard and security to the greater sanctions and commands. As a man that dare not leap over an hedge into our pasture will not venture, one would think, to climb over the wall into our garden; so he that durst not break through and transgress the bounds of these outward precepts, it was to be presumed, would never be so bold as to tread under feet and contemn the more divine laws. God intended mainly to preserve the holiness of the moral laws and spiritual precepts; and so he set the ceremonial as a thorny fence about them, to keep them from being broken. Their not eating of blood must needs make them to have a natural abhorrence of murder[o]: and their not marrying within such degrees of consanguinity was an exercise of their chastity, and a great security against adultery, and such like wickedness. Their taking no use of their poor brethren, and leaving them the corners of the fields when they reaped, &c. was a means to make them not to covet nor be greedy of the world. Their observing of so many days in memory of God's mercies must needs teach them to have the Sabbath in great reverence, which was in memory of the creation of the world, and their deliverance out of Egypt. Seeing they must break down so many mounds and banks as were cast up about the eternal law; it might reasonably be supposed that they would never attempt to destroy it, at least not as long as they kept these entire.

6. And in particular, these things kept them from idolatry,

[o] Gen. ix. 4, 5.

which was the highest contempt of God that could be. They were διατείχισμα μέσον Θεοῦ καὶ εἰδώλων, (as Nazianzen saith of the whole law[p],) 'a wall set up between God and idols,' to keep them from running unto strange worship: a partition which they must break down before they and the gods of the heathens could meet together. And this Maimon doth conceive to be the reason of those precepts which carry not their reason in themselves; that God might make them abhor to participate in the religion of the nations that were about them. For he well observes, that God commands them such things as were quite contrary to their practice: so that what the heathens loved, that they were to abominate; and what they reverenced, the Jews were to have for daily use: and they were not so much as to worship toward the same quarter of heaven; but whereas the world generally had their holy place in the east, God placed his sanctuary in the west. But it is not his observation alone, for Justin Martyr long before, in his disputation with the Jew[q], saith that the Israelites making a golden calf and offering sacrifice to it after the manner of Egypt, God did accommodate himself to them, and commanded them to offer him sacrifices, that so they might not give away his worship unto idols. And more plainly in his answers *ad Orthodoxos*[r] (if that book be his), he saith that the Egyptians taking all living creatures (except a swine) to have something of divinity in them, God distinguished between the clean and unclean, and permitted the one to be offered in sacrifice, but the other he forbad to be so much as eaten. By both showing that they were unworthy of the honour or name of gods, which might either be slain and eaten, or else were to be reputed of as unclean.

And Theodoret[s] asserts it still more particularly, that the Egyptians worshipping a goat and a sheep, as well as a calf or heifer; and likewise holding the turtle and pigeon among the birds in greatest veneration; God commanded the Israelites to sacrifice these rather than any other, that so they might learn how vile the religion of those people was, whose gods were continually slain and eaten by them. And for this cause also,

[p] Orat. 42. [al. 45. §. 12. tom. i. p. 854 D.]

[q] Dialog. cum Tryph. [§ 22. p. 120 E.]

[r] Respons. 35. ad Orthod. [p. 455.]

[s] L. 7. de Curat. Græc. Affect. [tom. iv. p. 837.]

it was (as he thinks) that God would not let them eat swine's flesh, because the Egyptians τῶν ἄλλων ὡς θεῶν ἀπεχόμενοι, 'abstaining from the rest as gods,' did think it lawful to eat of this creature only. But, if it should be thought that the Egyptians did not worship a goat, as it is certain they did a cow; yet the Jews confess that the Zabii or Sabæans, who were their near neighbours, did give divine honour to it, and against their infection they were no less to receive an antidote than against the other. And this perhaps may be the reason why God loaded them with such a world of ceremonies, that they might be so constantly employed as not to have time to think of adding any other devices of their own or others to his service, having enough to do already: only his infinite wisdom made these things serve to teach them higher duties, and to be shadows also of most glorious things to come, which I am not now to treat of.

7. But seventhly, as they put them in mind to consecrate themselves to God, so they remembered them to give him the very best, and the secrets of their souls. For it is well observed by Cyril Alexandrinus, that though God suffered them to offer sacrifices as other nations did, yet not after their manner; but so artificially and skilfully ordered, that (as I just now said) they did νοερᾶς λατρείας ὠδίνειν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς τὴν μόρφωσιν[t], 'travail with the form of a spiritual and intellectual worship in their womb,' of which they are now at last delivered. Their whole burnt offerings which ascended entirely to heaven, and were to be chosen out of the best of their beasts, fruits, or liquors, might well carry along with them the chiefest of their thoughts and affections, yea, their whole souls toward God, in whose service they were to spend themselves. And when they sacrificed peace offerings, they were to give to God the kidneys or reins, which are the seat of carnal pleasure; and the heart, (as some think,) which is the fountain of all living motions, and the seat (in the ancient language) of the thoughts; and then the blood of the beast, which might well teach them to offer even their lives to him (who gave life to them), as well as all other things which were most dear in their eyes.

8. To which it may be added, that the sacrifices could not be accepted, unless the person as well as the beast which he

[t] L. 9. Contra Julianum. [tom. vi. p. 308 D.]

brought were clean and holy: so that the offering did not make him good, but supposed him to be so already. Plutarch[u] gives us to understand how exact the Egyptians were about the red cow which they had decreed was to be offered to Typhon, when he says that if there were but one hair black or white, she was judged to be ἄθυτος, 'unlawful to be offered in sacrifice.' But he tells us likewise (in the same place), that the person who brought it was to be sound and in a good state of health, for they thought that that being which is most pure, undefiled, and without blemish, ought not to be served οὔδε σώμασιν οὔδε ψυχαῖς ὑπουλίοις καὶ νοσώδεσι, 'with bodies or souls that were full of putrifying sores or diseases.' You cannot think that the Jews were less intelligent than these heathen, especially since God required of the man that offered them, that he should be so far from greater pollutions, that he should not lie so much as under any ceremonial defilement. Or if there were any secret naughtiness lying in his heart, while his outward actions were unblamable, yet the sacrifice of such a wicked man was an abomination to the Lord, who knows the heart[x]: and therefore you may observe, that after the Psalmist had said[y], *The sacrifices of the Lord are a broken spirit, &c.*, and desired acceptance with God for him and his people[z], he adds, *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering, &c.*[a]: as if he had told us first, that a broken and contrite heart must go before, else no sacrifices could be accepted to do the soul good; and then secondly, that in the time of offering they must be accompanied with *righteousness*, i. e. the man's soul must be holy and devout, and have a good affection in it unto God.

9. And after this they could not be accepted but by the mediation of the priest; which taught them great humility, even when they were at the best, and in the greatest purity of body and soul.

10. And again, there were some sins for which no sacrifices would be admitted, nor no priest could intercede; which both taught them humbly to wait on the mercy of God, that he would find out a sacrifice and a Priest to expiate them, and likewise to take great heed how they fell into those sins.

[u] L. de Isid. et Osir. [p. 363.]
[x] Prov. xv. 8.
[y] Psalm li. 17.
[z] Ver. 18. [a] Ver. 19.

11. And the sacrifices themselves are to be considered as a part of their civil righteousness; for by the giving of these to God, and observing the rest of Moses's laws, they had a title to the land of Canaan. If they kept themselves from defilements, or brought these oblations and observed the feasts, and kept the outward part of the ten commandments, they were saved from being cut off by the magistrate, or cast out by God from the possessions that he had given them. But God did not intend that this should make citizens of heaven, or give them a right to the celestial inheritance; Canaan itself being but a type of heaven, and these ritual observances but shadows of more heavenly performances, whereby they were to seek that better country.

12. And yet when they performed these acts with an holy heart, in obedience to God's command, and as a part of his will; not relying on them, nor contenting themselves with them alone; they might be accepted as a piece of diviner righteousness, as Abraham's offering his son was, merely because God required him so to do. For then they were converted to have something of spirituality in them, and became of another nature: then he that calls himself the *righteous Lord*, and the *Holy One of Israel*, styles himself also by this name, *the Lord whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem*[b]. Those divine acts which render us acceptable in God's sight might be employed in these things as well as in others; that faith, obedience, resignation, humility, liberality, &c., which God requires, might be exercised in these observances, as well as in another matter, and for them (not merely for the sacrifices, &c.) they were commended.

And now how well will all this pains be bestowed, if every man who reads these things will never content himself, nor be at rest, without a state of inward purity and conformity to the divine will, and a sincere obedience to every part of that law which our Lord hath given us! Do not, I beseech you, cover yourselves with the leaves of piety, nor shroud yourselves under the empty shadows of religion: but put on the Lord Jesus Christ; bring forth the real fruits of justice, mercy, and humble godliness; let the life of God possess your souls, and

[b] Isaiah xxxi. 9.

the divine Spirit actuate and inform you as living members of his body. We have our washings and our sacrifices and our days of rest, as well as the Jews had: let us have a care that we use them out of a sense of that duty we owe to God, and as means to exercise and increase our graces; and not pride ourselves as they did in outward performances, and an heartless sanctity. If we glory merely in our baptism, in our being of such a party and persuasion, in going to our churches, hearing of sermons there, and repeating them at home, receiving of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, praying, singing psalms, and offering praises; we do but mock God with outward shows, and bring him to an idol, as Michal did Saul's messengers, instead of a man: nay, it is a greater shame and more damning for us to mistake so grossly, and to think to please God with such trivial things as words and outward gestures, when we know more than they did, and have their miscarriages laid so plainly before us. If God did not only despise but hate the Jewish service when not joined with obedience to his eternal precepts, then much more will he loathe all ungodly men now with all their worship which they bring him, though never so pompous and ceremonious. For their religion was full of shadows, ceremonies, and outward signs; but ours is a religion of more simplicity, and therefore we can be the less tempted to formality. And besides, we being eased of that burden, of that heavy yoke which lay upon their necks, the heartier obedience in other things may be more justly exacted of us, and expected from us. Let me conclude therefore with the words of the apostle of us Gentiles, and *beseech you, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God*[c].

[c] Rom. xii. 1, 2.

A

FRIENDLY DEBATE

BETWIXT TWO NEIGHBOURS,

THE ONE A CONFORMIST,

THE OTHER A NON-CONFORMIST;

ABOUT SEVERAL WEIGHTY MATTERS.

IN THREE PARTS, WITH AN APPENDIX, AND A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY.

THE FIRST PART.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THIS CITY, BY A LOVER OF IT, AND OF PURE RELIGION.

PROV. XV. 32.

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

Ὁ ἐρῶς μου ἐσταύρωται· ἔγω δὲ συμμορφοῦμαι.

[The former clause is from Ign. ad Rom. § 7: the latter apparently paraphrased from Phil. iii. 10.]

Nunquam Christo carior quam sub cruce gemens ecclesia.

IMPRIMATUR

Tho. Tomkyns, Reverendissimo in Christo Patri ac Domino, Dom. Gilberto, Arch. Cant. a Sacris Domesticis.

Nov. 7, 1668.

A GENERAL PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

THE bookseller having acquainted me with his intention of reprinting this treatise (which hath now been in the world near fifteen years), I thought good to let the reader know, that the author of it sees no cause, after so long observation and serious consideration of things, to retract or alter any thing he hath written therein: but is rather confirmed in his opinion that it was, and is, an useful and seasonable discourse.

Which as it was written to take down the pride and insolence wherewith the non-conformists began at that time to treat us, and to persuade men to conform themselves to the established orders; so to give them withal a true notion of religion; to preserve them from being abused by phrases; to instruct them in many parts of their Christian duty; to inform them wherein Christianity doth chiefly consist, and what will make them thoroughly good; and particularly, how necessary a part of Christian piety it is to obey the public laws, which no way contradict the laws of God; and to live in unity with their Christian brethren. What is to be done also for the restoring of this unity is here declared; and how vain a thing it is to cry up unity, when men themselves keep up the division; and that the present separation may be cured, if men please but to do their plain duty; that is, if the non-conforming people would but do what the best of their ministers acknowledge may be lawfully done by them, and if those ministers would but honestly press this upon them: as it is here demonstrated they ought to do; and that they cannot justify them, but must, if they will speak as they think, condemn the people in their separation. And how they can justify themselves in standing out because of a few ceremonies (which have been the great exception against conformity), I am not able to divine; since they themselves imposed without any scruple as many ceremonies (this author hath observed) in the taking of the Covenant, (which they looked upon as a sacred thing,) as our church doth in the performance of Divine Service.

II. But though these and such like things are the whole scope of this book, yet the author of it hath been loaded with many hard censures and unjust reproaches; as if he had done the greatest wrong,

not only to them, but to true religion. Which, thanks be to God, have not at all discouraged his resolution of adhering firmly to the principles which he avows in his book; for he was aware of such usage, and prepared against it before he set pen to paper: having observed, in the very book itself, that "no man ever opposed their fancies, but presently they voted him to be a person unacquainted with God; led by interest, and not by religion."

Yet that such a man as Judge Hales should pass that sentence upon the author which Mr. Baxter hath lately reported, was, it must be confessed, something surprising. For as he was a person of great learning and piety, so his candour (if common fame may be believed, for I knew him not) was no less eminent: and yet, as Mr. Baxter tells us [a], he was pleased to "express so great a dislike of the DEBATE and the ECCLES. POLICY [b], as tending to the injury of religion itself, that he wished the authors would openly profess that they wrote for themselves, and no more abusively pretend it was for religion."

III. But it must be remembered that wise and good men are wont sometimes to overshoot themselves when they are angry: and that they are never more apt to be so than when those beloved schemes which they have been long a drawing, and of which (having laboured much in them) they have entertained an high opinion, are rejected and torn in pieces. This is provoking to men that look upon themselves as masters in policy, as well as in law and religion: and is all the fault that I can think of wherewith this author can be justly charged. He was not then, nor is now, for that project of COMPREHENSION, with which everybody knows Sir M. Hales was

[a] Second Defence of Non-Conformists, p. 188. [In the year 1681 Baxter published "A Second True Defence of the meer Non-Conformists, against the untrue accusations, reasonings, and history of Dr. Edward Stillingfleet, dean of St. Pauls, &c., with some notes on Mr. Joseph Glanvill's Zealous and Impartial Protestant, and Dr. L. Moulin's character."

In his Additional notes on the Life and Death of Sir M. Hale, p. 38, Baxter attributes to him sentiments of a similar kind; and Calamy, in his Abridgment of Baxter's Life, p. 322, connects with the same two works some strong expressions of disapprobation in Hale's Discourse of Religion. See Sir M. Hale's works, vol. i. p. 326.]

[b] [Shortly after the appearance of the Friendly Debate, Samuel Parker, afterwards bishop of Oxford, published anonymously a work of great bitterness in language and spirit, the scope of which is sufficiently obvious from its title:—"A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie: wherein the authority of the civil magistrate over the consciences of subjects in matters of external religion is asserted: the mischiefs and inconveniences of toleration are represented, and all pretences pleaded in behalf of Liberty of Conscience are fully answered." 8vo. 1670. A Further Continuation and Defence of the same treatise appeared in the following year, to which was appended a letter from Patrick to the writer, which will be found at the end of the present work.]

strongly possessed [c]. The DEBATE, as he angrily calls it, came in the way of that, and lay cross to it: but as for his charge of the author's

[c] [Among the immediate results which marked the accession to power of the Cabal administration, after the fall of the earl of Clarendon, in the year 1667, was a project for a comprehension of all such non-conformists as could be brought by reasonable concessions into the communion of the church, and a toleration of the rest. In this liberal design the prime mover was Sir Orlando Bridgman, Clarendon's successor in the custody of the great seal; instigated by the duke of Buckingham, whose tolerance of religious differences is notwithstanding less attributable to a really large and enlightened policy, than to a personal indifference to the principles of all religion. His most active coadjutor in the undertaking was Wilkins, dean of Ripon, afterwards bishop of Chester, warmly supported by Sir Matthew Hale, lord chief baron of the Exchequer, Reynolds bishop of Norwich, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and others. The proposals which were to serve as a basis to the intended settlement were drawn up by Wilkins and Dr. Burton, chaplain to the lord keeper, and personally discussed between them and Drs. Bates, Manton, and Baxter, by whom they were communicated to their nonconforming brethren, under the following leading particulars.

1. That such ministers as had in the late times been ordained only by presbyters, should have the imposition of the hands of a bishop, with this form of words: "Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and administer the sacraments in any congregation of the Church of England, when thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."

2. That instead of all former subscriptions, after the oaths of allegiance and supremacy they should subscribe the following declaration. "I, A B, do hereby profess and declare, that I approve the doctrines, worship and government, established in the Church of England, as containing all things necessary to salvation: and that I will not endeavour by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, to bring in any doctrine contrary to that which is so established. And I do hereby promise, that I will continue in the communion of the Church of England, and will not do anything to disturb the peace thereof."

Clauses were added, leaving either indifferent, or at the discretion of the individual minister, such points in the liturgy or discipline of the church as constituted the chief objections of the presbyterian party.

At the same time proposals for a toleration were communicated by Baxter to the Independents through Dr. Owen, to the effect that all such protestants as would not accept the conditions for a comprehension might have full liberty to exercise their religion in public, and to build or procure places of worship at their own charges, either within or near such towns as they should prefer; the names of all such persons, together with the congregation to which they belonged, and the names of their teachers, being formally registered: they being disabled from bearing any public office, but exempt from the penalties of non-attendance at their parish churches. This indulgence was to continue three years.

A bill, embodying these heads of agreement, was drawn up by Sir M. Hale. Meanwhile, this juncture of affairs appeared so favourable, that a clause was inserted in the royal speech to both houses of parliament, Feb. 10, inviting them "seriously to think of some course to beget a better union and composure in the minds of his majesty's protestant subjects in matters of religion; whereby they may be induced not only to submit quietly to the government, but also cheerfully give their assistance to the support of it." (Commons' Journals, Feb. 10, 1668.)

The temper of parliament had been wrongly judged. The bishops, advertised of the contemplated measure by Seth Ward, bishop of Salisbury, to whom the design had been unguardedly divulged by Wilkins, in the hope of gaining his concurrence, concerted measures for its immediate defeat. A resolution of an unusual form is even said

writing for himself [d], I can demonstrate that, as things then stood, it was impossible (unless we will suppose him to have been a fool) he should have any such respect to secular advantages which he might thereby reap: save only the preserving himself by preserving the government; which he was bound to do as a member of this church and kingdom; which he loves unfeignedly, and whose present constitution he will always endeavour steadfastly to uphold. For they whom he opposed had too much power, he knew very well, at that time to obstruct him in such a design: and as they used all their interest to depress him, so they had such an influence, I can prove, upon some who are now dead and gone, that by their means they did actually keep him down a long time from rising at all in the world. Which he the more contentedly endured, because he had

to have been adopted by the lower house, of which no record remains in the journals, that no measure whatever of that nature should be permitted to be brought in. The bill, at all events, was never formally introduced.

In the debate upon that section of the king's speech, a motion by Sir Fretchville Holles, April 8, "that his majesty be desired to send for such persons as he shall think fit, to make proposals to him, in order to the uniting of his Protestant subjects," supported among others by Sir Thomas Littleton, Col. Birch, Waller, Hampden, and Seymour, was lost by 176 to 70.—Calamy, Abridgment of Baxter's Life, p. 317–322. Burnet, i. 449. Parl. Hist. iv. 417–421. Kennet, iii. 272. Baxter's Additional Notes on the Life and Death of Sir M. Hale, p. 20. Neal's Puritans, iv. 381–386.

All attempts that were subsequently made to revive the question proved equally abortive, being met by measures of increasing severity against the dissenting bodies; until in the year 1689, a measure based upon the prior experiment of Sancroft, although supported by the broad and liberal policy of the king, proving a failure, the cause of Comprehension absolutely and finally fell to the ground.—Hallam, Const. Hist. ii. 337.]

[d] [Parker himself inveighed in the strongest terms against the proposed measure, and against Hale and Bridgman in particular. "They were pleased to call it a Comprehension, by which (forsooth) the presbyterian rebels, all the laws being repealed, which at their will, or rather by their command, they required to be cancelled, might be received into the Church, and all ecclesiastical offices. In this gang there were one or two bishops, a few presbyters, with two pragmatical lawyers, who with great gravity required that this law might pass; as if they had in their hands the supreme power in church and state."—History of his own times, p. 37.

Whatever may have been effected by the efforts of the extreme church party, or by the writings levelled against the dissenters, there can after all be no doubt that the exorbitant demands and unaccommodating temper of the latter contributed much to defeat the idea of comprehension, and to alienate and disgust the minds of its projectors.

Thus while the terms offered to the Independents were on discussion thankfully accepted by Dr. Owen and other leading members of that body, the demands and objections of the presbyterians were so unreasonable, as to draw from the lord keeper himself the remark that "those whom he believed most ready to promote such a peaceable design would never agree in any thing, and he would have nothing to do with them."—See Dr. Burton's own account of the transaction, imparted by him from memory to Sherlock, who has preserved it in his "Vindication of the Rights of Ecclesiastical Authority," &c. p. 187.]

the testimony of his conscience (which is a thousand times more valuable than all the applauses they bestowed upon those who would wink at their evil doings) that this book was not contrived to serve any worldly interest; but, quite contrary, notwithstanding any prejudice it might do him in this world, faithfully to represent unto men the truth as it is in the Lord Jesus. Which could not be done indeed without exposing the follies, nay, the insincerity sometimes, of some persons who would be thought the only, or the most sincere lovers of him: but in exposing them, religion is so far from being injured (as the forenamed censure suggests), that it is rescued from that contempt which must necessarily fall upon it, if they pass without control for the most religious people.

IV. I have a great deal more to say in vindication of his upright intentions to promote nothing but true religion, the peace of this church, and the safety of his majesty and his government. But I will wave it all, and say but this one thing neither, to show that the book itself doth not tend to the injury of religion, but is very much wronged by the unjust sentence of that judge. It is a thing to which they themselves are wont to appeal, which makes me the rather mention it; and that is the effect this book hath had upon some men's minds to make them more truly and understandingly religious than they were before they read it. There are as serious Christians as any Mr. Baxter is acquainted withal, who have acknowledged as much to the author; and are so far from thinking this a book of which he ought to repent, that they have given God, and him too, solemn thanks for its being a means to open their eyes, and to reduce them from the error of their ways.

V. These things I should not have troubled the world withal, had not their unchristian and unmanly clamours against the book and against the author made it necessary, and had not so fair an occasion been presented by its being reprinted: which I hope may serve to many good purposes; for some, it is possible, may be persuaded to read it now, who would not then, at its first publication. And if they would be pleased to take that small pains, I am sure they would find those false principles confuted, which have done us so much mischief, that we owe all our present dangers to them; and the spirit of that party so truly described from authentic witnesses of it, that is, from themselves, that no sincerely honest hearted man, who will consider it, can be any longer deceived by it. No, he will rather detest and abhor it; especially that spirit of bitterness

wherewith they have declaimed against this innocent book (in such virulent language as I will not mention), merely for asserting such truths as this, which now is apparent to all the world, that "kindness and indulgence never altered them in the least, i. e. made them more thankful or obedient to governors, but only raised their presumption, and made them more insolent in their behaviour." For when they that have opposed them incline at any time to be favourable to them, they fancy presently it proceeds only from the terror of the Lord, which is fallen upon them, and that therefore they owe them no acknowledgments.

VI. There are many that seem now to stand amazed at the late treasonable conspiracy against his majesty's sacred person and government[e]; but if they had considered what was wrote here almost fifteen years ago, they might have been aware of a sort of men who were even then "waiting for a power to turn the still waters into blood." Read pag. 65, 66 of the Second Part[f], where public notice was given that they, fancying themselves to be the witnesses spoken of Rev. xi., *prophesying in sackcloth*, were withal possessed with this conceit, that "their sackcloth condition was almost at an end." And then they shall be able to do two terrible things; first, to "restrain the highest powers" in church and state, so that they should not be able to act; and secondly, to "turn the waters into blood;" i. e. the still people of a state or nation into war. And "all this," one of their eminent leaders tells them, "may be done, though not legally." Let any sober person also read what he may find, pag. 97, of "their sending fire out of their mouths to devour the adversaries," and then he will only wonder that such people have not sooner attempted to seat themselves in the throne; for they think they deserve to "sit in heaven judging the nations;" to which they once thought themselves advanced; pag. 75.

Let him read also what follows, p. 103, &c., concerning "inward callings and motions, without the allowance of the supreme magistrate," and he will be satisfied the author had reason to write with

[e] [The current year had been made memorable by the discovery and defeat of the two combined conspiracies set on foot by the Whig party; the greater of which had for its object the organization of the whole country in arms for the overthrow of the government, the lesser, which was known by the name of the Rye house plot, confined to a few desperate individuals, that of the assassination of the king and duke of York. For his supposed participation in one or both of these treasonable designs, Russell had already suffered death, July 21; and Sidney, who was executed Dec. 7, must have been awaiting his trial at the time when this preface was written.]

[f] [These references are to the pages of the sixth edition, published in 1684.]

some warmth against them, and to wish the laws might be duly executed, as the only means to secure us from the danger he apprehended from them. And he gave also a demonstration (pag. 119.) how much more a little strictness of the civil magistrate is able to do for the cure of their disease than all the discourses of churchmen.

VII. Which things are not here repeated to heighten the public severity against them, but to show that the author was moved by just and weighty reasons to compose these books; and that he is so far from being a Debate-maker, (as Mr. Baxter always scoffingly calls him,) that he is in truth a zealous friend to peace and quietness; and deserved well of the public for discovering and exposing those seditious doctrines, which pass for great mysteries among them.

I cannot say, among them all, (for I hope better things of many of them,) but none can tell what numbers there are who have received the infection; and the best among them would do well to consider, how, by continuing this separation wherein they are engaged, they have provided a sanctuary for the worst of mankind to flee unto, and to shelter themselves under the covert of religion. For it is a certain truth, that not only the discontented, the proud, the ambitious, the covetous, the revengeful, and implacable spirits, (which are a considerable party under any government,) but the atheistical and unbelieving, &c. fall in with the dissenting side, and push them forward to overturn this church and government.

VIII. They have the confidence indeed to assume to themselves the principal care and concern about religion; endeavouring to be esteemed the great, if not only asserters of our religion and liberties: which is as true as that they are the only godly or the most knowing in the things of God, which is abundantly confuted in both parts of this book. And it would be easy to show, that they are so far from being the bulwarks against popery, (many of them not so much as knowing what popery is, as this author hath observed,) that they have been the great promoters of that interest, and it will be owing wholly to them if ever it be again introduced into these kingdoms.

But I shall not enter in this preface upon so large a discourse; nor lay open all the bitter fruits of the woful divisions that they have made: which one would think should lie heavy upon their consciences, (as they do upon the whole nation,) and be a powerful motive to them to repent, and return into the communion of the

church; they themselves, as well as we, having smarted so much by these ruptures, that they have found the words of the wise man sadly verified: *Whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him. Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby* [g].

IX. This hath awakened several good men, who are truly affected towards them and towards the public welfare, to write many excellent treatises for the satisfaction of dissenters, that if it be possible these dangerous breaches may be healed. Which if they would read seriously, and this book among the rest, nothing could more contribute to settle their minds in matters of religion, and fix them in the constant communion of the church of England: nay, if they could but be persuaded to do so much as to consider, and weigh, and lay to heart, those godly counsels alone which Mr. Bernard gave those of the separation almost fourscore years ago, (which are contained in a very few leaves at the conclusion of the second part of this book,) I am confident it would make a great alteration in their minds, and bring those back again unto us who have rashly departed from us.

And let me beseech all those who shall cast their eyes on this preface, by no means to hearken to one sort of people among them, but to look upon them as men of an evil mind, that are perniciously bent to their own and all our destruction: such, I mean, as persuade them to read nothing that is said for their information; and take as great care to continue their scruples as we do to remove them. An instance of which we had long ago in the corrupting of Dr. Sibbs's book, called the Soul's Conflict: which hath been in many hands since, and might have done much to the settling men's minds in dutiful obedience to authority, if they of the then discontented party had not falsified his words, and quite altered the sense of his discourse. For it was intended to satisfy weak and doubtful people in those very things, as well as others, which still trouble this church: but lest they should receive such satisfaction as to conform to public orders, when they were in any uncertainty of mind about them, (as Dr. Sibbs honestly advised them to do, nay, told them they ought to do, notwithstanding their doubts and scruples,) there was care taken to have that passage quite blotted out of his book immediately upon his death, which happened as soon as the book had seen the light. Read the Second Part of this treatise, pp. 225, 226, &c., and

[g] Eccles. x. 8, 9.

then consider what kind of conscience this is, and how impudently it pretends to tenderness, which is so strait-laced about a ceremony, and takes such a liberty as this, to deprave other men's writings, and make them speak contrary to their meaning. If they could be persuaded to reflect whose practice this is, and how odious it hath made those who have been guilty of it, it is possible they might be ashamed to find this foul and (as they would call it in others) anti-christian dealing among themselves.

X. But such is the nature of this factious spirit, that it transports men with a restless zeal, not only to do but to suffer any thing to keep up a party, and confirm the hearts of the simple in their error: a famous instance of which we have in the old Donatists, who to maintain their schism would endure any trouble in the world; nay, gloried in their sufferings, and called themselves martyrs, that they might bring upon the church the odious imputation of persecution.

But hear what that great man St. Austin was wont to answer them upon this occasion, as we may now do to our present separatists, who make the same outcries about persecution. He constantly maintains that they complained most unjustly of their being persecuted by the church; for in truth the church was most heavily persecuted by them: and brings the example of Ishmael to prove it, who was cast out of his father's house upon Isaac's account, and yet the apostle doth not call Isaac the persecutor, but Ishmael alone[g]. This, I observe, he urges frequently: particularly in his book against Petilian about the unity of the church, where he concludes the 17th chapter in this manner: "*Woe to the world because of offences:* for the son persecutes the father far more grievously by evil living than the father doth the son by inflicting due chastisement upon him. The handmaid persecuted Sarah more sorely by her undutiful pride than Sarah did her by due discipline. And they persecuted our Lord more grievously who occasioned that saying, *The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up,* than he did them, when he overturned their tables and drove them out of the temple with a whip[h]."

XI. But most plainly and fully in his xith tractate upon the Gospel of St. John, he thus discourses: "Hear ye and see in these old deeds all the signs and notes of future things. Sarah the free woman is found to have afflicted Hagar the bondwoman, when she began to

[g] Galat. iv. 29. [h] [Al. contra Donatistas de Unitate Ecclesiæ, cap. 20. tom. ix. col. 377 E.]

behave herself insolently towards her: and when her son did so too, she not only complained of it to Abraham, but said, *Cast out the bondwoman and her son, &c.* Behold here, the free woman afflicts the bondwoman, and the apostle doth not call it persecution: but the servant mocks his lord and master, and that he calls persecution. The affliction, or hard usage, was not persecution; but the mockery, or abuses, was. What do you think, brethren? Do you not understand the meaning of this? It is even just so, when God will be pleased to stir up the supreme powers against heretics, against schismatics, against the dispersers of the church, &c. Let them not wonder, (it is no more than Sarah's using Hagar something hardly,) for it was from a divine incitation that Hagar was beat by Sarah. Let Hagar know herself; let her bow down her stiff neck. For when she fled from her mistress, and an angel met her, what doth he say to her but this, *Return to thy mistress?* For this end she was hardly dealt with, that she might return. And would to God she would return, &c. But do they wonder that the Christian powers are moved with a just indignation against the detestable dissipaters of the church? If they were not thus moved against them, how should they give an account of their empire unto God, &c. And what the angel said then unto Hagar, the same we say now unto you. O ye of the party of Donatus, if ye have suffered any corporal affliction from the catholic church, it is no more than Hagar suffered from Sarah: and do you as Hagar was commanded to do, *redi ad dominam tuam*, 'return to the church[i].'"

XII. So he concludes that tractate; and I cannot make a better conclusion of this preface than with the same entreaty to our dissenters; that they would put an end to their present troubles, by putting an end to the schism, and returning again into our communion. That is the use they should make of what they suffer; and for that it is intended. And did it but awaken them seriously to ponder those things that are written for their instruction, and particularly the woful fruits of separation, (some of which are laid before them here in the Second Part, p. 169 to 177,) it is to be hoped they might be persuaded to close in an inseparable union with us.

And if we could be so happy as to see this lamentable schism made up, it is not to be conceived how true religion would thrive and prosper; infinitely more than it can do now. For that time which men now spend in wrangling and disputing, if not in carping, cen-

[i] [Tom. iii. part. 2. col. 382 A.]

suring, nay throwing dirt at their brethren, would be spent in examining and reforming themselves and families; in admonishing one another; in exhorting to love and good works; in all the offices of Christian charity: and men would not be in such danger as now they are to be deluded; many fancying they have religion enough, when they have learnt to inveigh zealously against the bishops, the Common Prayer, and the ceremonies of the church.

And besides all this, (to omit other things,) if we could but all once agree to meet in the same place to worship God in the same prayers, we should soon be able to raise a maintenance in every parish of this great and populous city for one to read the prayers publicly in the church every morning and evening. Unto which one at least of a family constantly resorting, as they might very easily, what an extraordinary credit would it be to our religion! how beautiful and lovely, nay, how glorious would it appear! How it would stop the mouths of all gainsayers, who pretend they can see no religion among us but on Sundays! How strangely would it invite them to us, or at least daunt them, to see us so heartily in love with our religion, and with the ancient way of it!

For thus in the old time holy men and women worshipped God; rejoicing to *go with the multitude to his house.* Where recommending themselves, their families, the whole church, yea, the whole world, with ardent devotion to the Almighty Goodness, they made a great increase in grace, but especially in love and charity one toward another: being all of *one accord, and of one mind; keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Which was so remarkable, and won them such reputation, that the heathen took notice of it, saying, "Behold how they love one another[k]!" And it was a thing, no doubt, which drew many into their communion; as it would into ours, if we were so firmly knit together in one body, that it proclaimed to all the world what the Psalmist utters in words;

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

November 1, 1683.

[k] ["Vide, inquiunt, ut invicem se diligant,"—Tertull. Apol. cap. 39. p. 31 B.]

TO THE READER.

READER,

Do not throw away this little book as soon as ever thou meetest with something that offends thee; but sit down rather, and consider upon what account thou art offended. If it be only because the author contradicts thy opinions, and perhaps accuses them of folly, thou hast cause to turn thy displeasure from him upon thyself, for presuming so much of thy own infallibility: which if thou wilt not pretend unto, then read on further, and consider whether he contradicts thee with reason or without: and howsoever it prove, thou wilt not repent thee of thy pains. For if he reprove thy opinions without reason, thou wilt be more confirmed in them; if with reason, thou mayest exchange them for better. It is possible, indeed, that some things may seem to be expressed too tartly and severely, and others too lightly and merrily: but let not that put thee out of humour neither, nor make the reason which is offered less considerable. For the author (I can assure thee) hath no gall in him, nor was in any passion when he writ these things: but intended only (as naturally as he could on a sudden) to express such discourse as neighbours are wont to have in their private conversation; in which if there be nothing that is smart or pleasant, they can scarce keep one another from sleeping. He is very well aware under what great prejudices we all labour: and considers how hard it is to dispossess an opinion, though false, nay ridiculous, which a man hath sucked in with his mother's milk, and which hath been impressed on him by education, confirmed by custom, much encouraged by the consent and practice of those with whom he daily converses, and hath perhaps his complexion and natural temper to befriend it, and incline him to it. Upon such considerations as these he cannot be angry with those against whom he writes; but rather pities them, and is sorry they consider not such things themselves; and so repress that heat and passion wherewith they advance their own private late inventions, against public decrees and ancient constitutions. One sort

of men (he confesses) are apt a little to move his indignation, who pretend to the greatest niceness of conscience, and have handled the matter so as to be thought the most religious of all others; and yet make no scruple to do those things continually which are utterly contrary to good conscience. (So, I believe, an understanding heathen or Turk would resolve, were he made judge in the case, and had first their principles, and then their practices, laid before him.) Such the author thinks deserve to be rebuked; and if there be any thing spoken with sharpness in the ensuing discourse, it is when he hath to do with them. Yet in that case he hath used due moderation, not studying to vex men, but only to awaken and convince them. For he is very sensible that when we go about to displace any opinion, and introduce another in its room, we usually lose our labour, if we either fail to propound our mind dexterously, or use not such meekness as may show we have a good will to those from whom we differ. Where these are wanting, instead of inviting men to receive a truth, we find they are commonly further alienated from it. Now he hath some confidence he is not much defective in the first, having taken care to express his mind clearly and in plain words, and contrived his discourse into the form of a dialogue, to make it more easily apprehended. As for the latter, he cannot but think that he hath done his duty, and testified his kindness every where, even to those against whom thou mayest think him most severe. But if thou judgest otherwise, then he earnestly beseeches thee to overlook it and pass it by as an inconsiderate and hasty expression; and to weigh rather what truth is here presented to thee, than in what manner it is delivered.

In short, if it had not been to fill up some vacant pages, he had made almost as short a preface as those words of the son of Sirach, (according to which he expects the success of his labour,) Ecclus. xxi. 15. *If a skilful man hear a wise word, he will commend it, and add unto it: but as soon as one of no understanding heareth it, it displeaseth him, and he casteth it behind his back.*

Examine all things, and judge righteous judgment[a].

Octob. 20, 1668.

[a] [1 Thess. v. 21; John vii. 24.]

A FRIENDLY DEBATE,

BETWEEN

A CONFORMIST

AND

A NON-CONFORMIST.

PART I.

Conf. GOOD-MORROW, neighbour: I am very glad to see you, and you are welcome home.

Non-Conf. I thank you kindly. But I do not understand your salutation, not having been from home this twelvemonth.

C. No? what's the reason then that we have not seen you at church of late?

N. C. I believe you did not see me: but I assure you the church never wants my company.

C. How can that be? are you there as the angels are, after an invisible manner?

N. C. Pish! you do not apprehend me. Do you take your house of stone to be a church?

C. Yes, indeed do I: and (as I have been informed by them that know it) it is more properly called so than your assemblies. For the English word *church* originally signifies an house of the Lord for Christians to worship in; as I have been told by our minister.

N. C. Minister? he may be the king's minister perhaps, but he is none of Christ's.

C. My good neighbour, do not grow warm so soon; for you and I must have a great deal of discourse together. Pray walk in here to my house.

N. C. Well; what have you to say for your minister?

C. This I say, that he is both the king's minister and Christ's also: whereas I have reason to fear he whom you follow is neither.

N. C. Fare you well.

C. Nay, stay a little, and hear me out. How can he be the minister of Christ, who is disobedient to his sovereign, whom Christ bids him obey?

N. C. Disobedient? Yes, in those things which Christ hath forbidden him to do. And therein I hope you will be content he should obey God rather than man.

C. I knew this would be your answer. But what if I prove that he is disobedient even there where Christ and his laws are not at all concerned?

N. C. You cannot do it.

C. Why, what law of Christ is there that requires him to live in London, or at least within five miles of it?

N. C. None that I know.

C. But the law of the land forbids him to live in this place, or within such a distance[a]. And yet notwithstanding he lives here in defiance of that law, which you confess is not contrary to Christ's. And being here, he lives also in the breach of a great many other laws.

N. C. That was a tyrannical law.

C. Very good. But it is not repugnant, you are convinced, to the commands of Christ; and therefore he is not a good subject, and consequently not a good Christian; much less such a person as a minister of Christ ought to be.

N. C. Would you not think it hard to be so abridged of your liberty?

C. Yes, without doubt. But if we must never submit to such things as we count harsh and rigorous, then farewell all the doctrine of Christ concerning taking up our cross, and suffering patiently, &c. Which doctrines if you had studied, you would not have uttered such a word as implies the king to be a tyrant.

N. C. Pray pardon me that rashness.

C. I do most readily, and hope you ask God pardon for this and all other your rash words and actions. But that I may a

[a] [The allusion is to the statute "for restraining non-conformists from inhabiting in corporations," known as the five mile act, 17 Car. II. c. 2, to which more particular reference is made in a later portion of the work.]

little further convince you of that we were speaking of; I beseech you tell me, what law of Christ is there that enjoins him whom you follow to hold his assemblies just then when the public service of God, established by law, begins? Is not this sufficient to convince any unprejudiced man, that he is not content to enjoy his own way of worshipping God, but he would also destroy ours? That is, not only to act contrary to a law, but to endeavour to subvert what is enacted by it? Else, why might it not suffice him to begin when the public service is done?

N. C. For that I cannot tell what to say.

C. Then I can make an answer for you. Your minister is afraid lest any of you should go to church, and like our minister so well, that you should think there is no need of him.

N. C. Away, Away!. there is no danger of that. He so far excels yours, that if we should come to hear him, it would only make us like our own the better.

C. Wherein (I pray you) doth this excellency consist?

N. C. O sir, he is a very powerful man. Yours is a mere Dr. Dulman in compare with him.

C. What do you mean? that he hath a louder voice, that he is more vehement, and lays about him more than ours? Or what is it? If you take him to be powerful who presses his doctrine with strong and powerful reasons, such as we cannot gainsay or resist; I believe our minister will prove the more powerful of the two.

N. C. It may be so. I have heard indeed that he is a man of reason: but what is that to the *demonstration of the Spirit, and of power* [b] *?*

C. True: there is no comparison between these. But hath your minister that demonstration of the Spirit, and of power?

N. C. Yes, sure, if ever any man had.

C. That's good news; for then we shall see that which before we only believed. Hath he the gifts of the Holy Ghost? Can he speak with tongues, and prophesy, and work miracles, and tell us the thoughts of men's hearts?

N. C. What do you mean?

C. I mean that which the apostle St. Paul meant, who had this *demonstration of the Spirit, and of power;* which he gave the world, to convince them that Jesus was risen from the

[b] [1 Cor. ii. 4.]

dead, and was made Lord of all, whom they were therefore bound to obey.

N. C. But I mean something else.

C. Pray tell me what that is. Only let me desire you not to use words without the sense belonging to them; and to entreat your minister, that he would hereafter forbear to pray to God that he may speak in the *demonstration of the Spirit, and of power;* for nobody now can hope to do it.

N. C. I mean that he is spiritually enlightened to *search the deep things of the Spirit of God, which the natural man cannot discern.*

C. I wonder at you, that you should not discern the apostle there speaks of the Holy Ghost (i. e. the wonderful gifts of it) in them, which assured them of those things that no mere natural reason could prove. I doubt your minister is not spiritually enlightened, because he doth not instruct you better in the Scriptures.

N. C. Scriptures? he never says any thing but he quotes a place of Scripture for it. All his sermons are nothing else: whereas yours are but rational discourses.

C. I remember I have heard a wise man say, that one may talk nothing but Scripture, and yet speak never a wise word. And I verily believe it; for it is not the word of God when we mistake its sense, as you commonly do.

N. C. Doth yours do any better?

C. Yes: he seems to me to make it his business to let us into the meaning of the holy book. And he backs his reasons, not with phrases snatched from thence, but with such places as manifestly speak the same sense that he doth.

N. C. I have heard him sometimes endeavour to open the Scripture, but methinks he doth not do it in a spiritual way, but only rationally.

C. My good neighbour, consider what you say. Do you think that these two words, *spiritual* and *rational*, are opposed the one to the other? If they be, then *spiritually* is as much as *irrationally* and *absurdly.*

N. C. No, pardon me there. I do not think those two are opposite; but *carnal reason* is opposite to the *Spirit.*

C. To speak properly, you should say that *carnal reason* is opposite to *spiritual reason:* that is, reason that is guided by

fleshly lusts, is opposite to that which is guided by the gospel of Christ.

N. C. I say, as I said before, it is opposite to the Spirit.

C. You must either mean as I do, or else that it is opposite to the gospel, which is frequently called the Spirit in Scripture. But, pray tell me, how shall we understand the gospel, by our reason, or by something else?

N. C. By the Spirit.

C. What, must we have an immediate revelation to make us understand its sense? or must we study and consider, and lay things together, and so come to know its meaning?

N. C. Yes, we must give our minds to it, and then the Spirit enlightens us.

C. That is, it guides us to reason, and discourse, and judge aright. Is not that it you mean?

N. C. No: I mean it shines into our minds with its light.

C. These are phrases which I would have you explain if you can. My question is this, Doth the Spirit show us any new thing which is not the conclusion of the reasonings and discourses in our minds about the sense of Scripture?

N. C. I cannot say it doth.

C. Then you confess that the Scripture is to be interpreted in a rational way; we not having that which is truly to be called *spiritual* in distinction from the other, viz. the immediate revelation of the Holy Ghost, which the apostles had.

N. C. Still I cannot think that this is spiritual.

C. That is, you are prejudiced; or else you fancy every thing that you do not understand to be spiritual.

N. C. No, not so; but the manner of understanding the things of God, methinks, should be other than you conceive.

C. Truly, if you have any other manner of understanding besides this, and have not the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; I conclude you take the sudden (and many times pretty) suggestions of imagination to be illuminations from above.

N. C. Now you have hit on something that I would have said: the Spirit doth often dart things into my mind.

C. How know you that? do you take every thing that comes into your head, you know not how, to be an irradiation from the Holy Ghost?

N. C. No, I dare not say so.

C. Then you examine it, and consider whether it be rational and coherent, or no.

N. C. Yes.

C. Then you fall into our way whether you will or no. And whatsoever you think of us, we do not deny but God's good Spirit puts good thoughts ofttimes in our minds, and represents things more clearly to us than we could make them by all our reasonings; which is as much as to say, that it lets us see the reasonableness and aptness of such a sense (for instance) of the divine writings as we discerned not before.

N. C. Well, I am glad to hear you speak so much of the Spirit.

C. You might hear ten times as much if you would but frequent our assemblies. For there we are constantly taught, that the very ground and foundation of our faith in Jesus Christ is the Spirit, i. e. the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven upon our Saviour and his apostles.

N. C. You mix so much of reason with what you say, that I am afraid you are not in the right.

C. You should rather conclude the contrary, and not believe any thing but what you have a good reason for.

N. C. Say you so? How then shall I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Can reason tell me this?

C. I am sorry to see you so ill instructed. If you had continued to hear our minister, he would have made you understand before this time, that though our reason could not find out that truth, yet God hath given us the highest reason to believe it. And this I told you is the Spirit; the Spirit in Christ, and in his apostles.

N. C. Pray explain your meaning, for I understand not these new notions.

C. The Holy Ghost (I mean) descended on our Saviour at his baptism, with a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* This is one reason we have to believe on him. Then he wrought miracles by the power of this Spirit; and though he was killed, yet he was raised again from the dead by it; and after that he sent the Spirit upon his apostles, who thereby *demonstrated* that he was *the Son of God with power.* Which are all reasons for

my belief; and if you have any other I would gladly hear them, or know whether you believe without any reason at all.

N. C. These are spiritual reasons.

C. I like your language very well; only remember that these are the divinest reasons, which cannot be resisted. For thus our mind argues with itself: That which God testified by voices from heaven, and by a world of miracles, is to be believed: that Jesus is his Son, he did in this manner testify; therefore we are to believe that he is God's Son.

N. C. Who taught you to reason on this fashion?

C. Is this such a mighty business that you wonder at it? We are taught continually to give ourselves these reasons why we should believe; and methinks it is the most powerful preaching in the world. For, if I believe firmly that Jesus is the Son of God, is risen from the dead, and will come to judge the world, how can I choose but obey him with great care and constancy?

N. C. You say true; but methinks there is more spiritual preaching than this.

C. What should that be?

N. C. To preach the great mysteries of the gospel.

C. Is not this the first great mystery of godliness, *God manifested in the flesh*[a]*?* and is not this the next, that he was *justified in* or *by the Spirit;* which we give as a proof that he was manifested in the flesh? Read the rest, and then come and hear our minister, and you shall find them all unfolded one time or other in a plain and ample manner.

N. C. These, methinks, are no such great mysteries.

C. No; sure you know not the meaning of the word mystery, but live only upon phrases. Was not this a secret kept in the breast of God from ages and generations?

N. C. Yes.

C. Then it is a mystery, and the chief and first of all, that God hath sent his Son into the world. As for the ends of his sending him; if those be they you call mysteries, they are as much declared among us as among you, and perhaps a great deal more.

N. C. What do you mean?

C. I mean, his dying for our sins, and rising again for our

[a] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

justification, and intercession on our behalf at God's right hand. I dare say these are as well opened to us as ever they have been to you.

N. C. I am glad to hear it; for I always thought there was little but legal preaching among you.

C. You mean, we are taught to obey the commands of Christ.

N. C. No; the doctrine of good works is always sounding from your pulpits.

C. These are the same thing; for no other works are taught us but such as Christ enjoins. As for the works of Moses his law, we never hear of them, but only that they do no longer oblige us. If we did, I assure you we should call our preachers legal as much as you can do.

N. C. But I am afraid the insisting so much upon good works is legal.

C. You should rather fear that the preaching of them so little lead men to libertinism.

N. C. We are tender lest the grace of God should be impeached, by putting men so much upon doing.

C. Then it seems you think it peculiar to the spirit of the law to be very solicitous about doing well.

N. C. Yes.

C. Now I see you are in very gross darkness; for certainly both the law and the gospel put men upon doing; but not the same things, not with the same disposition.

N. C. Explain yourself; for methinks you are in the dark.

C. The gospel gives us better rules of life, and gives us power to do according to them with a more willing and cheerful mind than the law did.

N. C. Where then is grace all this while?

C. It was the grace of God that gave us the gospel; and it is his grace that accepts of our repentance and obedience after we have offended him; which pardons also, and passes by our failings and imperfections, when we sincerely design and study to obey him in all things.

N. C. You do not think then that you can deserve any thing of him.

C. No: how should we, seeing we are his creatures, and owe him all the service we can do him? Which makes us be-

lieve, that if we had been born in innocence, and continued so till this time, we could have merited nothing; much less can we pretend to it now that we are sinners.

N. C. But you think good works are necessary to our justification.

C. Who ever doubted of it that understood himself?

N. C. That doth many a godly divine; whom I have heard say, that they are not requisite to our justification, but only to our salvation.

C. I am loath to say that those godly divines did not mind what they said, because I ought in modesty to suspect my own understanding rather than theirs; but to me it seems a strange thing, that they should not observe salvation to be nothing else but our final and absolute justification at the day of judgment. And then I am sure our Saviour saith he will examine what men have done; and, according as he finds it good or bad, pronounce the sentence of absolution or condemnation. Read the xxvth of St. Matthew, from the 31st verse to the end.

N. C. What do you conclude from thence?

C. What? that if good works be necessary to our justification then when we come before the judge; they are necessary now to the beginning of our justification, or (if you would have me speak other words) to enter us into the state of justified persons.

N. C. How can that be, since we are justified by faith only?

C. Very well; for it is not an idle ineffectual faith which justifies us, but that which works by love to our Saviour; and love is the keeping of his commandments.

N. C. I see one shall not want rational discourse at your church, (as you call it;) but methinks I never found that life and power in your ministry which I have in ours.

C. I told you before, that I find nothing so powerful as the Christian doctrine rationally handled. And if the faith of Christ be not so preached as I now told you, for my part I feel no force in the loudest words that I hear; but am apt to say as the man did when he sheared his hogs, "Here is a great deal of noise, and little wool."

N. C. My meaning was, that ours move my affections very much, and yours stir them not at all.

C. I have been taught that there are two ways to come at the affections: one by the senses and imagination; and so we see people mightily affected with a puppet-play, with a beggar's tone, with a lamentable look, or any thing of like nature. The other is by the reason and judgment; when the evidence of any truth convincing the mind engages the affections to its side, and makes them move according to its direction. Now, I believe your affections are moved in the first way very often, by melting tones, pretty similitudes, running sentences, kind and loving smiles, and sometimes dismally sad looks; besides several actions or gestures which are very taking: and the truth is, you are like to be moved very seldom in our churches by these means. For the better sort of hearers are now out of love with these things: nor do they think there is any power either in a puling and whining, or in a roaring and tearing voice. But if you can be moved by such strength of reason as can conquer the judgment, and so pass to demand submission from the affection, you may find power enough (I think) in our pulpits: and let me tell you, the passions thus excited differ as much from the other, as the motions of a man do from them of a beast, if not more. For one may be affected, whether he will or no, by objects of sense: but reason convinces and moves us by sober consideration, and laying things seriously to heart. And I wish heartily you would examine whether the cause why you was no more affected with our preaching was not this, that you took no pains with yourself, i. e. you would not be a man, but was contented to be moved in religion like a mere puppet, whose motions depend upon the power of other agents, and not its own.

N. C. You need not have made so long a discourse in this business; for when you have said as much as you are able, I can answer all in a few words: assuring you that I am moved with the things they say, for I think they are the most soul-searching preachers in the world.

C. It is an hard matter to understand your phrases: if you mean such preachers whose doctrine touches the conscience, letting men see their duty and their sins plainly, I think none are to be preferred before ours.

N. C. Pray, sir, consider what you say.

C. What I have said, I say again. And I must add, that I

have cause to believe some of you have left our congregation, because the good man's doctrine searched into you too far, and came too near the quick.

N. C. I understand you not.

C. Have you never heard any man say that he would come no more to church, because his minister ripped up his sins of disobedience to governors, faction, rebellion, reviling superiors, rash censuring and judging their actions, immodest and malapert disputing with spiritual instructors, meddling with other men's matter, gadding from house to house to hear or tell news, if not to talk against the court and church, with other such like things that are too common, but not commonly reproved?

N. C. Yes, I cannot deny it.

C. Then no doubt he searched to the bottom of that man's heart; who finding himself wounded, instead of seeking for a cure, kicked at him that shot the arrow, and flung dirt in his face, calling him railer and reviler, when he only told him the plain truth.

N. C. You are angry.

C. No, truly, I am only desirous you should understand things nakedly, as they are in themselves.

N. C. Do you think that our ministers do not inform their auditors of the danger of these sins?

C. If they did, I believe they would have fewer come to hear them.

N. C. You are uncharitable.

C. No such matter: I know many of those that flock to them are not able to bear such doctrine. But they call those plain and searching preachers that rip up other men's faults, and that discover to them some kind of sins which they have heard the godly most bewail and complain of: for instance, deadness of heart in duty, spiritual pride, and unprofitableness under ordinances, though so powerfully administered.

N. C. Well; and are not these home-truths?

C. But I doubt many of those you call godly are troubled with other diseases, which had need be looked narrowly after: and besides, methinks your ministers do too plainly commend themselves, when they tell you what powerful ordinances you live under, and how you are fed with a feast of fat things;

whilst other poor souls are even starved in other congregations, meaning such as our's.

N. C. You might as well say that they commend us, when they caution us so much against spiritual pride.

C. You are in the right: it doth too palpably suppose you to be endowed with great gifts, and so is apt to put you into a high conceit of yourselves, notwithstanding all their caution against it. And therefore my opinion is, that they had better teach you all your duty; and then finding how short you are of perfection, that will be a more effectual means to keep you humble than all their declamations against spiritual pride.

N. C. They do tell us our duty. And I assure you some preach even against those sins which you say we do not love to hear of.

C. I will take your word for it: but they are rare men, and they do it rarely. I could tell you also of one that doing thus was forbid by his auditors to proceed, if he intended to have their company.

N. C. Methinks you should not suspect any of them to be guilty of negligence in these matters: do you not take them for conscientious and good men?

C. Yes, truly, I think there are many good men amongst them. But, to deal plainly with you, I look upon most of them as very imperfect, and in a lower form of goodness.

N. C. Strange! What reason have you for this?

C. They do not govern their passions, nor reverence their governors nor elders, nor fear to make a schism in the church; being furiously bent to follow their own fancies, impatient of contradiction, conceited of their own gifts, too ready to comply with the people's follies, and to humour them with new and affected phrases; nay, to gratify their rudeness with most unsavoury, clownish, and undecent expressions, not only in their preaching, but in their prayers. And, especially, they seem to me to have little and narrow spirits, wanting that great charity which our Saviour commends, and confining godliness to a small sect and party.

N. C. O sir, how much are you out of the way! If they were not the best men in the world, they could never come so close to us in their preaching, and search the very heart as we find they do.

C. Now that you repeat this again, you force me to tell you that which otherwise I would have concealed.

N. C. What's that?

C. That if we may judge of the sermons you hear by those we see in print, I think many of them are so far from searching into the conscience, that they rather dally and play with men's childish fancies.

N. C. Are you in good earnest?

C. Why should you make a doubt of it? You know I do not use to jest.

N. C. I do not believe you can give me one instance of any such thing.

C. Yes, but I can, and more than one. What do you think of the doctrine of repentance? Is there any thing deserves to be more gravely handled? Or can one ever expect to be pierced and wounded by that preacher, who treating of that argument doth not touch the soul in a lively manner?

N. C. I acknowledge it is a most weighty doctrine; but what then?

C. I will tell you. I never met with any treatise (in so serious a subject) more light and toying, than a book which came lately out of the press called "The Doctrine of Repentance useful for these Times," by T. W.[a]

[a] [The author's name is not disguised by initials, but given in full, —'by Thomas Watson, minister of the Gospel,' 8vo. Lond. 1668. Watson was one of the most eminent of the Independent ministers of the period of the commonwealth and restoration. His origin and early history are not known, but he finished his education at Emanuel College, Cambridge. In the year 1646 he became rector of St. Stephen's Walbrook, where he laboured with great assiduity for nearly sixteen years. Inconsistent as this tenure of church preferment might be thought with the Independent tenets which he openly maintained at a later period, and which his writings of that date already evince, such a course was by no means without parallel among other professors of those opinions. At the same time he stands in contrast with many of his brethren of that persuasion, in offering a vigorous opposition to the measures concerted by the army for the death of Charles I., uniting with the Presbyterians in their remonstrance to Cromwell against that violent resolution. When called upon to preach before parliament, Dec. 27. 1648, his sermon entitled "God's Anatomy upon Man's Heart," gave such offence that the thanks of the house were formally refused him "for not acknowledging them to be a parliament." (Rushworth, 1378. Whitelocke, 365.) In the year 1651 he was arraigned on suspicion of complicity in Love's plot for the restoration of Charles II. but was released before being put upon his trial, and freed from sequestration or punishment by the lenity

N. C. You are prejudiced.

C. I doubt you are, and yet I believe I shall make you of my mind. Look you, here is the book which one lent me: what think you of the very beginning of the Epistle to the Reader? "Faith and repentance are the two wings by which we fly to heaven." Doth not this look like a schoolboy's phrase which he applies to every subject? For at another time T. W. would tell you, that prayer and meditation are the two wings whereby we fly to heaven. Now as for repentance, he tells you presently it is a purgative, and bids you not fear the working of this pill; that "moist tears dry up the rheums of sin, and quench the wrath of God."

N. C. Let the Epistle alone, and go into the body of the book; there you will find it more powerful.

C. Truly I have not read it over, but I opened it in the several places, and I met only with a jingle there, where I expected a clap of thunder.

N. C. That is because you had not a fancy to it.

C. I assure you I brought an indifferent mind to it, being glad if good things be said by anybody. But I could not but be disgusted when I read this, p. 16, that "holy sorrow is the rhubarb to purge out the ill humours of the soul," &c.

N. C. You take little bits, and mind not his continued discourse.

of Cromwell himself. Refusing to conform at the restoration he vacated his preferment. His farewell sermon preached Aug. 17, 1662, on Acts xx. 28, was published together with those of Calamy, Manton, Case, Jenkins, Baxter, Thomas Jacomb, Bates, Lye, and Mead, in a volume entitled "The farewel sermons of the late London ministers," 8vo. 1662. He continued his ministrations however in private, and on the occasion of the great fire in 1666, when so many churches were destroyed, and the public functions of religion interrupted, became conspicuous among those non-conformists who opened rooms with temporary fittings for divine worship. On the declaration of indulgence in 1672 he licensed the great hall of Crosby house, then belonging to sir John Langham, who was a patron of the non-conformists. There he laid the foundations of a flourishing society on congregational or independent principles: till his health giving way he yielded his place to Charnock, and retired in 1675 into Essex, where he died suddenly about 1689 while engaged in his closet at prayer. "He was one," remarks Calamy, "so well known in the city for his piety and usefulness, that though he was singled out by the Friendly Debate, he yet carried a general respect from all sober persons along with him to the grave." — Account of silenced ministers, p. 37; Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 285, 1235; Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches, i. 331; Palmer's Non-Conformist's Memorial, i. 148.]

C. Read then what he saith of an hypocrite, pp. 89, 90, and you will think you are reading one of Blunt's Characters, if you ever saw that book. I expected to have found him cut up and anatomized; whereas in truth he doth but stroke him and play with him. For thus he says, "The hypocrite is a saint in jest, he makes a majestic show, like an ape clothed in ermine or purple. The hypocrite is like an house with a beautiful frontispiece, but every room within is dark; he is a rotten post fairly gilded: under his mask of profession he hides his plague sores. The hypocrite is against painting of faces, but he paints holiness: he is seemingly good that he may be really bad. In Samuel's mantle he plays the devil, therefore the same word in the original signifies 'to use hypocrisy', and 'to be profane.'" But at this present we will let the rest alone, and only observe how he concludes what he says of him. "Hypocrites are far gone with the rot, and if any thing will cure them, it must be feeding upon the salt marshes of repentance."

N. C. Why do you look me so in the face?

C. To see if you did not smile; as sure you would do, were you not angry with me for laying open this childishness. Nay, do not frown. I appeal to your conscience, whether you feel any more force in such words as these, than in a feather blown with a great blast against your face, or in a straw thrust with a strong arm against your breast.

N. C. I cannot commend them; but you ought not to examine books (writ with a good intention) so severely.

C. I am far from that humour, and have only exercised a little of that liberty which he gives us in the second page of his epistle; where he tells us, he "thought to have smothered these meditations in his desk, but conceiving them of great concern at this time, he rescinded that first resolution, and exposed them to a critical view." Now, if I had a mind to play the critic, as simple as you think me, I could show you that he ought to have exposed them only to the view of his very good friends, and not to critics.

N. C. That was only a careless word.

C. Being one of his friends, I am willing to believe so; else I should have thought it an affectation of a fine expression.

N. C. I wish you had never seen the book.

C. So do I wish too, provided nobody else had seen it. But

pray be not troubled, nor interpret this as any disrespect to him; for I should not have given notice of any of these things to you, but that you would needs make comparisons, which are always odious. And you may make a good use of this freedom which I take; for I persuade myself, if you would but compare some of our books, which you despise, with this now mentioned, you would find there is as much difference between the jingling and rhyming of this and their solid sense, as between the noise of a Jew's trump, or bagpipe, and the grave sound of an organ.

N. C. But have not you men that quibble, and hunt after little sentences and fine words, like him whom you condemn?

C. I had no intention to deny that; but only to show that there is trifling every where. And therefore that you ought not to be so partially affected to all your own, and so unequal to all ours.

N. C. What's one to so many as are among you, whose books also are licensed to pass the press?

C. To answer the last in the first place: I can tell you upon my own knowledge, that such simple books have been rejected; and if any of them have chanced to pass, you shall seldom find the preface of some other grave divine, much less of three or four divines of note, set before in commendation of it.

N. C. Why! No more hath that you have been speaking of.

C. True, but no doubt he might have had those ornaments, if he had pleased: for I have seen many pitiful books that have had great commendations prefixed. And as the dunghill cocks have the largest combs, so commonly the meanest books are set off with the largest praises.

N. C. I perceive you still persist in your confidence that you know more books of this nature.

C. Yes: but I do not delight to muster up all the folly that is in print; and therefore shall only take notice of one book more, writ in another way; and (if you please) try whether it deserve the commendation which the preface bestows upon it.

N. C. What book is that?

C. It is called, "Christ and the Covenant," &c., in ten Sermons, by W. B.[c], which pretends to be full of mysteries; and, as

[c] [William Bridge was born in the year 1600, in the county of Cambridge, and educated at that university, where he graduated M. A. in

we are told in the Epistle to the Reader, gives us the "very marrow and quintessence of the gospel." Upon which account he exhorts us to buy it, and makes us believe it is worth any money.

N. C. And you bought it?

C. No, I did not think it worth any thing, when I had once perused a little of it.

N. C. What part did you peruse?

C. I thought that the marrow I was told of might be found (if any where) in that discourse which he calls the Way and Spirit of the New Testament. But as far as I examined it, I met with nothing but a great many bones to pick, and they had little or nothing on them.

N. C. Pray forbear this merriment; and let us seriously consider what he saith.

1626, and became fellow of Emanuel College, which was at that time the chief centre of nonconformity. (Cole MSS. vol. 50. p. 7.) After ministering in a parish in Essex five years, he was invited to the charge of the parish of St. George's Tombland, in the city of Norwich, where he officiated until silenced by bishop Wren, in 1636, for non-conformity. He continued in that city some time after his suspension, but being finally excommunicated, and the writ *de capiendo* issued against him, he withdrew, in company with Jeremiah Burroughes, to Holland; where he was appointed, jointly with that divine, to the charge of a congregational church in Rotterdam. The altered position of affairs under the long parliament encouraged him to return in the year 1642, and he was nominated one of the Westminster Assembly of divines, in which he became prominent as one of the independent or dissenting brethren. At the breaking out of the civil war he wrote in defence of the lawfulness of taking arms against the king, in answer to Dr. Ferne. He subsequently settled at Yarmouth, until his expulsion by the act of uniformity, on St. Bartholomew's day 1662. After his retirement, he established a meeting-house at Clapham, in concert with Burroughes, Thomas Lye or Leigh, and Henry Wilkinson, where he officiated till his death, March 12, 1670. A collected edition of his works was published with a memoir of his life in 1845. A letter of his to Henry Scobell, clerk to the council, on the state of the Independents and Presbyterians in Norfolk, dated Aug. 16, 1655, not included in that collection, is preserved in Peck's *Desiderata Curiosa*, xiii. 9.

"Archbishop Laud, in his annual accounts of his province to the king for 1636, thus mentions this man. 'Mr. Bridge, of Norwich, rather than he will conform, hath left his lecture and two cures, and is gone into Holland.' King Charles' note upon this is, 'Let him go, we are well rid of him.'" Laud's troubles and trial, p. 541;—Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 714.

"The Friendly Debate," says Calamy, "was very severe upon him; but how easy had a retaliation been, could it have been thought that the exposing those, whose aim it was to do good, had been likely to do any

C. That is my desire. And for your satisfaction, read that part where he tells us what the way of the Old Testament was, and what the way of the New is. I believe I shall convince you, that he is not only out of the true way, but also describes his own way after a poor and wretched manner.

N. C. Be not so earnest.

C. He tells us in the first place, that "the Old Testament legal spirit serves God upon the account of rewards mostly, or chiefly, or only[d]:" but the New Testament spirit doth not. Whereas there is nothing plainer, than that rewards are propounded in both covenants to encourage our duty. And the gospel urges us so frequently with the consideration of the rewards it promises, but I question not but he that hath them always in his mind, and serves our Lord Christ out of those hopes, as his chief motive, pleases him very well. For the true difference between the covenants is not that the one sets rewards before men, and the other not; but that the old covenant made with the Jews propounded temporal rewards, and the gospel propounds eternal; which are as often repeated in the gospel as the other in the law. And therefore he hath discovered a new nothing, when he saith, that "to serve God for rewards mostly, &c. is plainly legal." Nay, it is absolutely false. For if a man be moved (as I said) only by hopes of unseen things in another world to obey God, and quit things present for his sake, no doubt he serves him in an evangelical manner.

N. C. Good neighbour, be not so confident.

C. Why should I not have some degree of confidence about these things, seeing I am master of common reason? and I have consulted also with several of our ministers about them, who have made it plain to me, that the gospel propounds eternal rewards in the life to come, as the great motive to well doing. The most that any sober man ever said (as far as I can learn) in this argument is, that he who doeth well only in sight of those rewards is in a weak estate; but they always allowed him to be indued with an evangelical spirit.

N. C. Then it seems you "live upon your own purse, and upon what you can earn of God;" which he tells you is contrary to a gospel spirit.

service to religion!"—Calamy's Account of the silenced ministers, p. 478; Palmer's Non-Conformist's Memorial, ii. 208.]

[d] [Serm. v. Works, vol. iii. p. 86.]

C. It is so. But that is an impertinent conclusion from his former discourse. For a man may serve God upon the account of reward, and yet not be so foolish as to imagine he can earn any thing of him.

N. C. Indeed you speak too confidently.

C. I am not of that mind. For I may judge what is consequently spoken as well as another man. And I am sure that conclusion is nothing to the purpose: only he imagined this to be a pretty saying, that "a man of a gospel spirit knows he lives upon a better purse than all his own earnings can amount unto[e]."

N. C. I wish you would be more temperate.

C. Who can endure to see men bear up themselves so highly, and hear them cried up, as if they were full of the Spirit, whenas there is scarce common sense in them, and not be a little concerned?

N. C. Well, suppose there be one flaw in that discourse, must that make all this ado?

C. One flaw! Read the rest, and you will find that it is no wiser. For he would have us immediately after to receive this as another note of a legal spirit, that it is a "fearing spirit, put on rather by the threatenings, than the promises;" and "the gospel spirit, rather by promises than threatenings."

N. C. And is not this true?

C. No. For our Saviour bids his disciples again and again to *fear*[f]; not indeed such things as the Mosaical spirit did, temporal calamities upon their bodies, goods, &c., but eternal miseries, which they should avoid, though with the enduring of all the hardships in the world. And whereas he says, that "the difference between the dispensations is, that the one is terrible, the other comfortable[g];" it is manifestly false[h]. For the gospel speaks a great deal more terribly than the law doth to hypocrites and unbelievers.

N. C. Therefore he tells you afterwards, that "a gracious soul may be full of fears about its condition."

C. This is nothing to his business. For he was not speaking concerning the fears which a soul hath about its estate; but of

[e] [p. 87.] [f] Luke xii. 4, 5. [g] [p. 88.]

[h] [The sentiment however is one for which the sanction of many passages in St. Augustine, as well as other eminent divines, early and recent, might be pleaded: e. g. "Hæc est brevissima et apertissima differentia duorum Testamentorum, timor et amor."—Contr. Adimant. cap. 17. tom. viii. col. 137 E. Compare Jeremy Taylor's Righteousness evangelical, Works, vol. viii. p. 251.]

the principle upon which a man doeth his duty. And, if I understand any thing, a Christian is moved by fear, as well as hope

N. C. Well, he acknowledges so much when he saith a gracious heart may be full of fears.

C. I tell you again, this is impertinent; for these are not motives to his duty, but rather hinderances and impediments, as he will tell you. And besides, he makes them to be causeless fears; for, he saith, they are the fears of a man "that stands upon a rock;" and therefore he ought not to be troubled with them. Whereas the Scripture requires us to *fear*[f], (and tells us there is cause for it,) *lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, any of us should seem to come short of it:* and to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*[g]*:* and, *to have grace to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear*[h]. Mind this last place, and tell me if it do not directly oppose what he saith. He persuades you that a fearing spirit is a legal spirit; and the apostle tells you, it is an effect of the gospel grace, and such a thing whereby we acceptably serve God.

N. C. You have studied this, I perceive, and I have not. But what say you to the third, which is this: "A legal spirit measures the love of God by outward things[i]?"

C. I say it is the best thing he says; and he was to blame that he passed it over so slightly and hastily, as if it were not worth his notice.

N. C. Is not the fourth as remarkable, viz. "that an Old Testament spirit trades much, or most, or altogether, with conditional promises;" the other not?

C. It is indeed very remarkable: first, for the paltry phrase of "trading in promises;" and secondly, for the pernicious consequence of the doctrine.

N. C. Why? Is not the doctrine true?

C. No; for though there was an absolute promise of sending Christ, yet there are no absolute promises which Christ makes to us of giving us salvation.

N. C. He seems to grant as much.

C. That is, he contradicts himself.

N. C. No; he saith, "though the promise be conditional,

[f] Heb. iv. 1. [g] [Phil. ii. 12.] [h] [Hebr. xii. 28.]
[i] [P. 89.]

yet the Lord hath promised that condition elsewhere, and that without a condition."

C. Then it is not conditional; for what is without a condition is absolute.

N. C. You would make him speak nonsense.

C. Do you try at leisure if you can make good sense of his words, which methinks are not much better than if he had said, the promises are conditional, but without any condition.

N. C. Fie, sir! they are thus to be taken: the promise is upon a condition, only that condition is promised without a condition.

C. Now you have mended the matter finely, and made it plain that he thinks all the promises are absolute. Which how well it agrees with their being conditional, I pray tell me, when you have thought of it, at our next meeting.

N. C. Do not you grant then that God promises the condition (upon performance of which we shall enjoy the promise) without a condition?

C. No, indeed; for it is certainly false. He promises (for instance) eternal life if we repent and effectually believe, and not otherwise. Repentance therefore and faith are the conditions of that promise. And I affirm that God nowhere promises that any of us (do we what we will) shall repent and believe. But he requires us to consider and lay to heart what is spoken to us by his Son Jesus; which is as much as to say, that upon this condition he will work repentance and faith in us.

N. C. He doth so. "But though the promise runs conditionally, yet," he tells us, "it shall be fulfilled absolutely."

C. You mean, *W. B.* tells us so; and therein confesses he did not speak truly before when he said the promise was without a condition; for now he acknowledges that it runs conditionally. And to say it shall be fulfilled absolutely, is to say, that it seems to be conditional, but is not.

N. C. Well, methinks there is much of mystery in what he delivers.

C. That is, you do not understand it; but it sounds prettily, and so you like it. And so I believe you do the next, (for the same reason,) wherein he tells you, that "in the Old Testa-

ment they came to Christ by the promise, but now we come to the promise by Christ[h]."

N. C. I like it, because it seems to carry a great mystery in it.

C. It may seem so, but it doth not.

N. C. No? what do you make of it?

C. I think it rather carries a plain falsity in it. For we come to Christ by the promise as well as they; and they went to the promise by Christ as well as we.

N. C. I know not what you mean.

C. That's because you know not what he means. But if you will understand me, thus it is. There was a promise that God would send Christ into the world; and the fulfilling of this promise is one great reason why we believe in Jesus; and so we are led (you see) to him by the promise. On the other side, there were promises of great things that Christ would do for those that believed[i] on him; and those then that did believe the Messiah would come hoped for the enjoyment of these promises by his means; and so (if I may speak in this phrase) they went first to Christ, and then to the promise.

N. C. I do not well apprehend you, and therefore think it's time to lay aside this book.

C. You do discreetly. For if you had continued your discourse about it, I should have discovered a world of follies to you.

N. C. The things of God are foolishness to the natural man.

C. These are not the things of God, nor the things of a man neither; but childish fancies, or, as we commonly speak, new-nothings.

N. C. I know they appear so to the natural man.

C. I do not judge according to mere nature, but by the direction of the Spirit which instructed the apostles; and therefore you apply that Scripture foolishly to me.

N. C. You use your reason too much.

C. You have some reason to say so; for if I had used it less, these things had not appeared so ridiculous.

N. C. By that time your heart "hath lain so long a-soak in the blood of Jesus" as his hath done, we shall hear other language from you.

[h] [P. 90.] [i] ['believe' ed. 6.]

C. You are taken, I perceive, with that new phrase in the Epistle to the Reader, and only because it is new; else it would seem very irreverent, being taken from a toast in a pot of ale, or a sop in a dripping-pan; a great deal more fit for a preface before a book of one of those you call old soakers than of such a reverend author.

N. C. You are merry, sir.

C. Truly, I do not make myself merry with any men's sins: but at their little foolish affectations, how can one choose but smile? Why could he not as well have said, that he had a long time thought of the efficacy and virtue of the blood of Christ; or that he was much acquainted with the love of Christ in dying for us? But to say that he had lain long a-soak in his blood, is as absurd as if he had told us that he had lain long baking himself in the beams of the Sun of righteousness, or toasting [k] himself before the fire of the Divine love.

N. C. Pray, neighbour, forbear these expressions.

C. I was only going to show you that we have as good a faculty as you to coin new words and phrases, if we would take the liberty. But I will forbear, if you will but be content upon this occasion to look back with me, and consider how all the nation comes to be overrun with folly.

N. C. How, I pray you?

C. As soon as you had cast out of doors all that was old among us, if any fellow did but light upon some new and pretty fancy in religion, or some odd unusual expression, or perhaps some swelling words of vanity, presently he set up for a preacher, and cried up himself for a man that had made some new discovery. And such was the confidence of these men, both in inventing strange language and proclaiming their great discoveries every where, that the poor people were persuaded the nation never knew what communion with God meant till this time. Now they thought the happy days were come, when the Spirit was poured out, the mysteries of the gospel unfolded, free grace held forth, the anointings and sealings of the Spirit vouchsafed, Christ advanced to his throne; and when they should have such incomes, indwellings, and I know not how many other fine things, as never was the like heard of before. For one man comes and tells them of the "streamings of Christ's blood freely to sinners:" another bids

[k] ['roasting' edd. 5, 6.]

them "put themselves upon the stream of free grace," without having any foot on their own bottom: a third tells them how they must "apply promises, absolute promises." A fourth tells them there is a special mystery in looking at the "testamentalness of Christ's sufferings." And because he found that everybody had got into their mouths "gospel truths, hidden treasures," and suchlike words; he presented them with "Sips of sweetness[i]," and told them he was to come to show them how "the saints might pry into the Father's glory;" and, in short, bid them not be afraid of new lights[j], but "set open their windows for any light that God should make known to them."

N. C. Sure nobody used such expressions as these.

C. This last is to be found in that very author you have laid out of your hands, p. 47, who also puts the people into a fancy that they have revelations[j] and visions in these days.

N. C. Certainly you do him wrong.

C. You shall be judge of that when you have read the beginning of the next page. There he tells you that there are four times wherein you should think much on Christ crucified. And the first is this[k]; "In case of some revelation or vision that you may be under." Which he repeats again in the following page[l]. "It is a good thing," saith he, "to think of Christ crucified at all times; but when you have revelations and visions, &c. then it is a good time." From whence I conclude, that as he bids you "open your windows for new lights to come in," so, when he thinks on't, he will call upon you, as the beadle doth in the streets, "Hang out your lights, Hang out your new lights."

N. C. Pray be not so abusive.

C. There is no abuse at all in this. For the same reason that made him step at first out of the common way of speaking may make him use such an expression as this, if he light on it. It being also a thing peculiar to such men to please the people with some new-found words and phrases; which if they should lay aside, together with all their abused Scripture expression, they would look just like other men, only not so well.

[i] [The title of a work written by John Durant, an independent preacher at Canterbury and Sandwich, "Sips of Sweetnese; or consolation for weak believers: a treatise discoursing of the sweetnesse of Christs carriage towards all his weake members;" a second enlarged edition of which appears in 1652.]

[j] ['light,' 'revelation,' edd. 5. 6.]

[k] [Serm. ii. Works, vol. iii. p. 37.]

[l] [P. 38.]

N. C. You may say your pleasure.

C. I thank you. And pray look back again, and consider what followed all these "glorious discoveries," as they called them. Since the people were so much in love with new-minted words, in which they thought there were great mysteries concealed; those men who would excel all the rest of these new teachers set forth themselves in more pompous language, and made a show of a more glorious appearance of God in them. For they told the people of being "Godded with God, and Christed with Christ," &c. which strangely amused silly souls, and made them gaze and stare as if the Holy Ghost were come down again from heaven upon men.

N. C. Our ministers are not of this strain.

C. But they first began this affectation of new phrases; and no wonder if their scholars endeavour to outdo them.

N. C. They are none of their scholars.

C. Sure they all came out of their school. For they taught men first to despise sober and plain doctrine, which teaches them their duty toward God and their neighbour; entertaining them with finer speculations of pretended gospel-mysteries and manifestations; with which we heard almost every sermon stuffed: so that he was thought nobody that had not good store of them. Now as those you admire found they could win no great number of proselytes unless they left the old track of preaching sobriety, justice, charity and godliness; so their scholars found in a little time that the new notions and language of their masters were grown stale; and that unless they invented newer, at least coined some other phrases, their reputation would be but small. And thus it came to pass, that every one, striving not so much to speak what would profit as what would please, dressed up religion in affected language of his own making, and new expressions, if not new notions, were heaped one upon another every year; till none knew what Christianity was. For at last there arose a company of fine youths, who judged even their masters to be in a low and dull form of religion, sticking in the beggarly elements, and the dead letter, and the Old Testament spirit, as their manner of speaking was. These imagine that not only we, but you, know Jesus only in the flesh, and stand in the outward court, and are not yet come within the veil to discern the Spirit and the mys-

tery which they alone bring to light. Such a progress doth fancy make when once it is let loose, and men are taught not to reason, but to believe. There is no end of its follies; and God only knows when this nation, which is overflowed with them, and is made fond of them, will be reduced to a more sober mind.

N. C. We bewail it as well as you.

C. I am glad of it. But I wish you would bewail the "original sin of all," (as W. B. advises you in another case, I doubt with no good meaning, p. 473,) which will be found in yourselves; from whence a great number of other mischiefs have flowed, and made the same progress with that now named. For you first taught the people to forbear all expression of devotion when they came into the church, and decried the reverence of uncovering the head there as superstitious and abominable. And so they soon took the liberty to come talking into the church, and not only to walk with their hats on to their seats (even when the minister was reading the holy Scriptures), but to keep them half on when he was at prayer. And then, because others were wont to kneel, or at least stand, in that holy duty, they would show their liberty, or their opposition (I know not whether) in sitting, nay in lolling after a lazy fashion, as if the minister were telling a sleepy tale, not praying to our Creator. In short, there were no bounds could be set to their extravagancies; but they found out as many new gestures, and odd frantic expressions in their prayers, as before they had done in their preaching.

N. C. For all this, you shall never make me believe but that they are the only spiritual preachers.

C. This you told me before; and I am of your mind, if you call that spiritual doctrine which is airy, thin, and so refined that nobody can feel and touch it, no, not with his most serious thoughts.

N. C. Yes, I can feel it to be very spiritual.

C. It is an hard matter to understand your language. Do all our preachers only tell us carnal things?

N. C. That is not my meaning.

C. What then?

N. C. I call it spiritual, to distinguish it from moral teaching.

C. As much as to say, our ministers teach men their duty, and yours do not: or else, that yours teach them only such

duties as may be done in their spirits between God and themselves, but not such as are expressed in life and manners in our bodily actions; which tend to the good of our neighbours and the happiness of the world.

N. C. I understand you not.

C. Your sermons are chiefly about prayer and meditation, and communion with God, and believing——

N. C. Yes, believing: now you have hit my meaning.

C. But I was going to add something to that word, viz. believing without doing. Else you will not count it spiritual preaching.

N. C. Not if they should insist much upon doing. For there are more spiritual matters for believers to be instructed in.

C. That is, things revealed to us by the Spirit sent down upon the apostles.

N. C. I know not what to say to your explication, for I never heard it before. But pray proceed.

C. I know no spiritual things but those which concern the glory of our Saviour in the heavens, his power at God's right hand, his intercession there for us, his coming again to judgment, and such like; which are proved to be true, not by human reason, but by the Spirit descending from heaven on the apostles.

N. C. Well, and are not these great things?

C. And do not our ministers treat of them as well as yours?

N. C. But not in a spiritual way. Ours treat of spiritual things spiritually.

C. I guess what you mean. They treat of these things in such a manner as not to bring them down to meddle with your lives, or not much and chiefly, as W. B. speaks. Or thus, they draw matter of comfort from them, but little or nothing of duty.

N. C. I know not how to express it: but I always find that they handle these things in a sweeter manner than other men.

C. I believe you. For nothing is so sweet and pleasing to flesh and blood, as for a man to hear how much a great Prince is in love with him, and how freely he loves him; how his heart beats in heaven toward him; and especially how careful and compassionate he is toward him in a persecuted condition.

N. C. And is not this very spiritual doctrine?

C. Yes. But setting aside all fancy, nothing is more solidly opened by our divines than the power of our Saviour, and his great love toward his faithful and obedient disciples.

N. C. You must needs still bring in obedience.

C. I have been taught to do so. For this great Lord always *loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: and therefore God hath anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows*[j]; i. e. given him such a royal power in the heavens as there is none like it. Unto which glory we cannot be promoted, but by the same way of righteousness. And let me tell you, I think I have heard it clearly demonstrated, that though there is infinite comfort and satisfaction in believing that our Lord Jesus is so exalted, and hath made us such promises, which he is able to make good; yet all this is but to encourage our obedience, and to make us constant and firm in the Christian religion, notwithstanding all the difficulties and troubles we meet withal for Christ's sake. So that in truth these are the most spiritual preachers, that is, the best interpreters of the mind of the Spirit, who urge and press men, from the consideration of what God hath revealed to us in these matters, to be *steadfast and unmoveable, and abundant in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*[k].

N. C. Doth not Christ himself say that the *work of God is believing*[l]*?*

C. Yes; but not such a believing as yours, which is only a relying on Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

N. C. What was it then?

C. An effectual persuasion that God hath sent Jesus into the world, as he there tells you; *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* And if you can think he means a bare persuasion of this, that God sent him, without the effects and fruits of it, which is the becoming his disciples, sincere profession of his religion, and living according to it; then the devil may be a good believer, a very spiritual person and great saint; for he very early acknowledged him to be the Son of God. And we read that *the devils believe, and tremble.*

N. C. Alas! this is a poor faith, which cannot apply the promise.

[j] Heb. i. 9. [k] [1 Cor. xv. 58.] [l] John vi. 29.

C. That is because it is not made to them. For if it were, and they had but a good fancy, they might apply it (in your way) as well as anybody else, and yet remain devils still.

N. C. Now you go beyond all the bounds of reason.

C. Because I follow you, whose doctrine leads to this.

N. C. How doth that appear?

C. I cast my eye casually upon one place in the book newly named, and there I found this mystery; that "though there is a condition in the new covenant, yet no condition to be performed by us, but by Christ, our second Adam:" p. 69[m]. And though he confesses something must be performed by us, yet he saith, it is all promised to us, and that without condition. And therefore a little after he makes this a mark of those that are in covenant, to be "begot again by a promise, especially the absolute promise:" p. 72.[n] Now since no condition is to be performed by us, why should any person take any care about it? or why should any one trouble himself about doing that which is already done for him, or, if it be not done, is promised that it shall be done? especially since his great work is (as you say) only to close with the promise, to lay hold upon the absolute promise? For, nobody being named particularly in the promise, nor any qualification supposed in any man whereby he may know that he is capable of the blessing rather than another, no reason can be given why all should not apply it to themselves, though never so bad; nay, why they ought not to apply it.

N. C. No, that is too great a boldness; they must be humbled and cast down——

C. Then it seems they ought to feel some qualification in themselves, which encourages them to lay hold on the promise. Though, if it be absolute, it's more than needs, nay, than is good: for they ought to have no respect to any of those things, but only the freeness of the promise. And then, I pray, why might not a devil remain so still?

N. C. But such as are within the covenant will find themselves wrought upon to forsake their sins, &c.

C. Grant that. Yet if they do, it is no encouragement to them, according to your doctrine; and therefore if they do not, it ought to be no discouragement. For they ought not to

[m] [Bridge, Serm. iii. Works, vol. iii. p. 51.] [n] [P. 54.]

take any confidence to go to God because of any thing they find in themselves; and therefore they may be confident, though they find nothing in themselves, but only a strong fancy that the promise belongs to their persons.

N. C. Though they cannot take any confidence because they are so disposed toward God, yet they must be well disposed.

C. Why so? Will he have it so, in order to give them confidence to hope in his mercy that their sins shall be forgiven?

N. C. No: the promise of that is absolute.

C. Then a man may be as confident that hath not those dispositions, as he that hath; believing that it is God's will he shall have them when he pleases.

N. C. I see you understand nothing of the covenant of grace.

C. Yes, I understand that it was the riches of God's grace, to make a covenant of saving those sinners who would obediently believe on his Son. For this was more than he was bound to grant; and this believing and obedience can deserve nothing of him, (it being a duty to believe what he reveals, and to do what he enjoins:) and besides, he gives us the means of faith, and helps to well-doing.

N. C. How can it be free, if we do any thing for it?

C. I have told you that we cannot do any thing for to deserve it; and what we do he enables us to perform it. And therefore it is free; because when we have done all, yet he is no way tied to give us any thing, but only upon the account of his own most gracious promise.

N. C. You grant then his promise is from mere grace.

C. Nobody doubts of it that I know of. But this grace is not so fond as to make the promise to any one that is confident it belongs to him, even whilst he remains in a state of sin. Such a favour God had to sinners, as freely, and without any disposition in them, to send his Son and his Holy Spirit: but unless they become like his Son, they are taught by him not to presume he will give them all the blessings the gospel promises; for they are made only to the faithful.

N. C. God will make them so.

C. But according to your opinions, that is a thing which they need not consider, when they apply the promises of sal-

vation to themselves. For you say, they must have respect to absolute promises; which you know have nothing to do with any qualification for this favour. In pursuance of which doctrines you persuade yourselves, that assurance of God's love is not to be grounded upon any grace wrought in us; but only upon the testimony of the Spirit, persuading us that our persons are beloved, and that the promises are made to us.

N. C. This is Antinomianism.

C. May be so; and your ministers may be Antinomians, and yet not know it.

N. C. Call them what you please, I am resolved to follow them: for I think you will allow them to be the most experimental preachers in the world.

C. Still you pester me with phrases which I doubt you understand no more than I.

N. C. Is not the word plain enough?

C. It is, if you mean by an "experimental preacher" a man that hath tried himself those ways which he earnestly beseeches others to walk in: but then it will not serve your purpose; for you cannot deny but we have men that lead as strict and holy lives as any of yours can do.

N. C. I mean, one that preaches his own experiences in the ways of God.

C. You do not well know what you mean. For this is either the same that I now told you; or else it may signify no more than one that preaches his own fancy.

N. C. Now it is hard to know what you mean.

C. I mean, that tells you stories of God's "withdrawings" and "desertings;" and again, of his "shinings" and "sealings," &c.

N. C. And do you call these fancies?

C. Commonly they are no more. For I observe well-meaning people fall into these melancholic and despairing fits: and are recovered again into greater cheerfulness and assurance without any reason at all; but only by a fanciful application of some Scripture or other which belongs not at all to their condition, and yet casts them down, or raises them up.

N. C. You are mistaken; they have reason.

C. If there be any that can be thought a sufficient ground of God's withdrawing himself, sure it must be some provoking sin

which they have committed. And yet I see that they who cannot charge themselves with any voluntary act of sin, nor with any such omission neither, fall into these fancies (so I must still call them) of being forsaken by God. All the occasion that ever I could find for such black thoughts is but some such thing as this, that they have not such enlargements as they were wont; or cannot go to duty, as they speak, with that delight which formerly they took in it: which your ministers ought to teach them are no reasons, but only melancholic conceits. And if these be the things you call experiences, there are none of us but understand them as well as you, finding the same dulness and heaviness in ourselves. Only we are taught not to talk or complain of it, but to do our duty notwithstanding as well as we are able, and we shall find it will not last alway.

N. C. You make too light of these things.

C. I hope not. But you lay too great weight upon them, and make these such marks of a gracious soul, that it helps to put good (but weak) people into these humours; and, I doubt, makes them lay hold on all occasions to fancy themselves deserted.

N. C. Pray speak no more of these matters, for I see you are ignorant in them; as you are in all the great things of God, which are *foolishness* to the world. Why do you smile? They are the apostle's words[q].

C. I know it. But I smile to see how you prove that which you deny, viz. that fancy governs you.

N. C. How do I prove it?

C. By this application of the apostle's words according to their sound, and not their sense.

N. C. Why, what is their sense, think you?

C. That to a mere Gentile it seemed a foolish thing to believe that a crucified person was made Christ, that is, Lord and King of the world. The Jews stumbled at this, and would not receive him for the Messiah, or King of Israel, who shamefully hung upon the cross: and the Gentile thought this a ridiculous persuasion, which none but idiots would receive. But then he tells you what Gentiles and Jews these were; viz. such as

[q] 1 Cor. i. 23.

were merely natural, and did not allow the testimony of the Spirit, whereby the apostles proved this doctrine; for they who were convinced that the Holy Ghost was in the apostles, and judged not by mere human reason, but heavenly testimonies, made no scruple to believe that this crucified Jesus was made Lord of all: and herein they acknowledged the great power and wisdom of God to be made apparent.

N. C. You give the oddest interpretations of Scripture that ever were heard of.

C. Every thing seems odd to you which is cross to your fancy. But examine the Scriptures seriously, and you will find the interpretations which I have learnt to be plain and even.

N. C. I do read them continually.

C. I believe you; and that you apply every thing as you fancy it will fit these times.

N. C. I apply it as I see those do, whom (notwithstanding all that you have said) I take to be the most experimental preachers. For *that which they have seen with their eyes, which they have looked on, and which their hands have handled of the word of life, that declare they unto us,* as St. John speaks[r]. Pray be more serious, and do not laugh while we speak of these things.

C. Well, I will. Bring me one of those men that have done this, and I tell you seriously, I will become one of his disciples.

N. C. I can bring you an hundred that I am acquainted with.

C. Then the story of the Wandering Jew is no fable. Would I could see but one (one, I assure you, would suffice me) of these happy men.

N. C. Would I could know what the matter is that makes your fancy wander and rove on this fashion. You have talked so rationally all this while, that I cannot but admire now to see your wits go a wool-gathering, I know not whither.

C. I do not stray one jot from the business. I have heard (as I was going to tell you) of a Jew, who being present at our

[r] 1 John i. 1.

Saviour's death, and seeing him hang upon the cross, hath ever since wandered up and down from place to place, and (as the story goes) remains somewhere or other to this very day. I always took it indeed for a lie, till now that I meet with you; who give me hopes to see a hundred such men, and that in London.

N. C. You seem to me to be distracted. I have nothing to do either with Jews or with lies.

C. A little, my good neighbour, with lies. For if your men have *seen the Lord of life with their eyes, and looked upon him, and handled him,* then they were alive in our Saviour's time, as that Jew is said to have been. Or else he hath appeared to them since, as he did to St. Thomas, saying, *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side.*

N. C. No: there was some other seeing beside that.

C. What! hath W. B. or some of his disciples had a vision, wherein they beheld him and looked upon him?

N. C. You cannot understand the things of God.

C. Yes, as well as you; unless you have had some revelation, which he presumes you may enjoy.

N. C. There is seeing and feeling without that.

C. You can tell me of none which we are strangers unto. If you mean that you discern the truth and certainty of the Christian faith, I doubt not that our eyes are as good as yours in that point. If you mean that you approve of the Christian life, even from your own sense of the satisfaction and happiness there is in it, I make no question it is as palpable to us as to you. Or if you would have us think that you have long and seriously meditated upon the mysteries of the gospel, so as to be mightily affected with them, I do not believe that we are defective in that neither, but have looked upon them as well as yourselves, and are as affectionate admirers of them.

N. C. You are fallen, methinks, into a strain of boasting.

C. It is you that have compelled me, as the Corinthians did St. Paul, by undervaluing him. And if you think me a fool in this, (as well as other things,) I am in no worse condition than that great apostle thought he might be. Read his discourse in 2 Cor. xi. 16, 17, &c., and give me leave to speak to you a

little in his words. You are a wise sort of people, and so can be content now and then to *suffer fools gladly.* For *you suffer if a man bring you into bondage* to certain opinions of his own; which make it necessary for you to do or not to do that which God hath not tied you unto. *If a man devour you* by living continually upon you; *if he take of you* gold, silver, and other gifts whereby he must be maintained; *if he exalt himself,* pretending perhaps to more of the Spirit, and a more special mission from God than other men have, still you suffer him very patiently. Why then cannot you suffer me only to *boast a little,* especially since it is not of myself, but of our ministers which I hear? And those few words of St. Paul in that place shall suffice to this purpose; *Are yours the ministers of Christ?* (*I speak,* you will think, *as a fool*) *ours are more.* For they know Christ Jesus the Lord as well as yours: they preach him as sincerely and feelingly: they tread in his steps, and crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. And beside, they are more peaceable, more obedient to governors, more respectful to their superiors, more modest in their inquiries and resolutions about difficult points, more charitable to those that dissent from them, and more desirous, methinks, to edify rather than to humour the people. For they do not seek to please their itching ears, and gratify the longings of their fancies with new-found words, affected expressions, and odd phrases; but tell us those things that concern our Saviour and his holy life in plain and proper language. Which, I protest, fills me with joy and gladness whensoever I think of it. And it makes me conclude they have much experience of the things of God, because they make me so feelingly conceive what the pleasure and contentment is of being meek and lowly, sober and chaste, contented and heavenly-minded; and above all things, of having an heart enlarged with great charity to all men, so as to be ready to forgive, and to do good. This holy disposition, you cannot deny, must needs make them capable to understand the mind of God revealed to us in his word: which book, I observe, they are very careful we should understand aright: and not interpret and apply it, as I see you do, according to our fancy. For you conceive that, because St. John declared what he *saw and handled of the word of life,* (i. e. of our Saviour and his gospel,) to convince some that denied he

was come in the flesh, or gainsaid their doctrine, you are able to do the same.

N. C. Well, I see my mistake in that. But, say what you will, your preachers never had such a seal to their ministry as God hath given ours, by converting thousands through their means.

C. More phrases still? You mean God hath shown they are rightly called or sent by him.

N. C. Yes.

C. Then all those men who turn people may say that they have a seal of God to their ministry. See, say the popish priests, what multitudes we convert! therefore we are sent of God. Behold, say the quakers, we have a seal from heaven; for so many of your people have forsaken you, and follow us!

N. C. But you mistake me, sir; they do not only convert men to our party, but to be good: they really turn them from sin to God.

C. I am glad to hear it. But may not a question be made, whether they are not converted only from some, not from all sins; nay, whether they are not converted from one sin to another? So I am sure you confess it is with the quakers, who make men sometime more civil in one regard, but more uncivil than ever in others.

N. C. Sure, you cannot suspect us to be like them.

C. It will be fit for you to examine yourselves thoroughly in this point; whether, for instance, many among you are not converted from debauchery to covetousness; or from loving the world to hate their neighbours; from cold devotion at our churches to a fiery zeal against our ministers; from undutifulness to natural parents to the greatest contempt of civil and spiritual. Nay, is this never made a note of a man converted, that, though he have a great many faults, yet he is wrought to have an antipathy to bishops, common prayer, an innocent cassock, and a surcingle, as you are pleased in derision to call our ministers' girdles?

N. C. Truly I think the badness of your ministers may have provoked the people to be rude to them; the best of them being no better than time-servers.

C. We will consider that by and by. Only let me note, that you cannot deny what I suspect you guilty of. And beside,

suppose there be a great many converted by your ministers to true godliness, this is no greater seal (as you call it) than we have; there being many turned from all their evil ways to a more noble degree of virtue than you can commonly show, by those very men who did then heartily serve God, when yours too much served the time.

N. C. You will say any thing.

C. If you know what is meant by a time-server, and do not only pelt us with words, I hope to make you confess what I say.

N. C. Try what you can do.

C. I think we are agreed that a time-server is one who complies with the naughty humours of the time for his own profit; and meddles not with the reigning sins, for fear of offending his good masters, by whom he is maintained. A thing which it is hard to find any man of note guilty of among us; but which it is notoriously known the most eminent of yours were faulty in in their time.

N. C. I doubt you will prove yourself a false accuser.

C. Charge me with that, if you can, when I have done. And let me ask you, whether you are not satisfied that the sins of sacrilege, and rebellion or disobedience to governors, are very heinous; and whether it be not apparent that there was great need, in the beginning of the late times, to warn the nation to take heed of involving themselves in that guilt, which several considerable persons were running headlong into. I think you will not oppose me in either of these, and I take your silence for consent. And then I dare appeal to you, whether your divines were not very meal-mouthed, as we use to speak, and afraid these words should come within their lips, even then when they saw these sins come to their full growth. Nay, I affirm that you shall scarce find mention of them in their writings, much less was any thing heard of them in their sermons. Which is an evidence to me, that either they had not sound and good consciences, or that they wanted courage, and contented themselves to swim along with the stream. And in the first place, let me tell you something that hath been observed of their unworthy compliance with the sacrilegious humour of those times. A worthy minister of my acquaintance once told me, that your Assembly-men, or other divines, who

wrote Larger Annotations upon the Bible[s], (of the edition of an. 1645,) are very guilty in this point. "For where there is a fit occasion," said he, "to speak against sacrilege, and where other expositors are wont to declare the foulness of their sin, there they say not a word, but pass it quite over, as if they knew of no such thing in the world." Though he would not impute it to their ignorance, but to their base cowardice and flattering disposition; which was loath to displease the lords of that time.

N. C. Sure he did them a great deal of wrong.

C. I will tell you some of the places he instanced in. First, that known place, Acts v., where he told me in that edition of 1645 there is no mention made of their sacrilege, and defrauding God of that which was devoted to him, (though that was their chief crime,) but only of their hypocrisy, covetousness, and lying. I must confess I have not the book, and there-

[s] ["There is one work unjustly ascribed to this Assembly, and that is, the Annotations on the Bible, which commonly bear their name. It is true, as is hinted in the preface before the said notes, the same parliament that called the Assembly employed the authors of these Annotations: for letters were directed to them by the chairmen of the committee for religion, urging their undertaking of that work; and they were, by order of that committee, furnished with whatsoever books were needful. It is also true, that several of those that were concerned in it, were members of the Assembly. And yet it was not undertaken by the direction or with the consent of the Assembly; nor were the major part members of the Assembly; nor did any deputed by the Assembly review the work when it was finished. So that it cannot upon any account be said to be theirs. However, it was a good work in its season, and I shall add the names of the true authors, as far as my best inquiry would help me to intelligence. Mr. Ley, sub-dean of Chester, did the Pentateuch. Dr. Gouge had the two books of Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther for his province. Mr. Meric Casaubon did the Psalms; Mr. Francis Taylor the Proverbs; and Dr. Reignolds Ecclesiastes. Mr. Smalwood, who was recommended by archbishop Usher, did Solomon's Song. The learned Gataker did Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Lamentations; and is (in the opinion of many competent judges) exceeded by no commentator, ancient or modern, on those books. Ezekiel, Daniel, and the small Prophets were in the first edition done by Mr. Pemberton, and in the second by bishop Richardson. The notes on the four Evangelists are Mr. Ley's, and those on St. Paul's Epistles Dr. Featley's: which latter are broken and imperfect, on the account of the author's dying before he had revised or finished them. There were also two other persons concerned in this work, viz. Mr. Downame and Mr. Reading, who might probably have the other

fore you must take his word for it[t]. But thus much I will tell you upon my own knowledge; that having occasion once to look upon their Annotations (and that of the third edition, much enlarged) upon Rom. ii. 22, where there was a fitter occasion to say something of this sin than in the former place, because the very word *sacrilege* is here mentioned, I observed (I well remember) that these tender-fingered gentlemen would not so much as touch it, but fairly slipped over it[u]. For they only speak of the notion of the word in civil law, (and that not directly,) defining it, "the taking away from the emperor any

parts of Scripture allotted them that are not here mentioned."—Calamy's Abridgement of Baxter's Life, ch. vi. p. 86.

The occasion which gave rise to the compilation is pointed out by the authors themselves in their preface to the second edition.—"Divers of the stationers and printers of London were induced to petition the committee of the honourable house of commons, for licence to print the Geneva notes upon the Bible, or that some notes might be fitted to the new translation. Which was accordingly granted, with an order for review and correction of those of the Geneva edition, by leaving out such of them as there was cause to dislike, by clearing those that were doubtful, and by supplying such as were defective. For which purpose letters were directed to some of us from the chair of the committee for religion, and personal invitations to others, to undertake and divide the task among us."—fol. Lond. 1651.]

[t] [In the second and third editions, the commentary upon the history of Ananias is introduced thus:—"The scope of this history is to shew how odious to God that perfidiousness is, which, counterfeiting sanctity, would impose upon God, as if he saw not what men do (for otherwise, Ananias giving a part had been commendable): so great a mischief is hypocrisie, so dangerous the perversion of an holy purpose, and the withdrawing of things consecrated to the churches use, (though by himself who gave,) that the sacrilegious perished by detaining a part of that whole which he would seem to give."—The third edition appeared in 1657.]

[u] [The entire comment upon the passage is as follows:—

"Some here make a question why the apostle changeth the word, and saith not as before, Thou which saist a man shall not steal, dost thou steal? Thou which saist a man shall not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? So here, Thou which abhorrest idols, dost thou commit idolatry? He saith not so, but, Dost thou commit sacriledge? varying the crime. Hereunto a double answer may be given; first, that the apostle useth an aggravation, as if he should say, Thou which abhorrest idols, dost thou commit a worse sin, to wit, sacriledge? secondly, it may be answered, that idolatry is spiritual sacriledge, because it robbeth God of honour; for if by the imperiall law in the code, *titulo de crimine sacrilegii*, it is defined sacriledge, *Imperatori eripere quod ejus est*, 'to take away from the emperor any thing that is his,' it ought to be much more accounted sacriledge to take away from God that which is his."]

thing that is his." Would not this make one think that they were very much afraid to meddle with this sin?

N. C. Perhaps that is the meaning of sacrilege there.

C. One can scarce believe it who consults the place; where the apostle reprehends a man who commits something of the same nature with that which he reproves another man for. And therefore I doubt not but those who then cried out against idols, and by no means would endure them in the holy place, did discover their profaneness and disrespect to that place some other way; which in all likelihood was in not bringing their offerings thither, but detaining from God that which was his own peculiar goods. They that are learned, I doubt not, can give you other reasons.

N. C. But I have heard some say, that things are not holy now, so as they were then; because they were separated by a particular direction and express command of God, which was the thing that made them holy.

C. This is one of the most notable things you have said yet, however you came by it. But it will not do your business. For what will you say, if I show you that even in their notes upon the Law of Moses, and other places of the Old Testament, they say not a word of this sin, of turning that to another use which God hath separated by his special command unto his own? no, though there be the fairest invitation, and sometimes great reason to do it?

N. C. I believe you undertake more than you can do.

C. Thus much I can assure you upon my own knowledge, that consulting upon a time (as any man may have occasion to do) their notes upon Levit. xxv. 34, where the fields belonging to the Levites are forbidden to be sold; I found that they were perfectly mute, and said not a word of the nature of this sin amongst the Jews: for fear, one would think, that any Christian should thence conclude, that it was unlawful to sell the bishops' lands, which then their masters were about.

N. C. The text is plain enough, if any one had a mind to make that inference.

C. Aye, but some annotations on a plain place make it more observed: and I am sure they are large enough in their descants upon as plain words as those. And therefore why they should forbear to say any thing there, I cannot imagine, unless

it were a fear of displeasing the parliament, and many of their partakers. For as for themselves, I believe many of them would not have had the lands sold, but employed to their use and benefit.

N. C. Well, is this all?

C. No, there is another remarkable place in the book of Joshua[x], where God commands all the gold and silver, &c. which should be taken in Jericho, to be consecrated to him, and put into the treasury. Notwithstanding which, we read that Achan purloined two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold, to his own private use, and was therefore severely punished, nay, all the congregation troubled for his offence till he suffered for it[y]. And yet these men say not a syllable of this sin in their notes on either of those verses; though all other divines are wont from thence to show how dangerous it was then to rob God, and take away what was separated to his uses. In other places I am sure they oft make large declamations against some sins, and in a manner preach against them: and therefore, why they should not have a syllable to say here about this matter, is a great mystery, unless I have discovered the cause of it. As for that place, Gen. xlvii. 22, I know you will say they were idolatrous priests whose land Joseph sold not. But methinks they needed not have made an excuse (as they there do) for Joseph's not selling them, as if it had been an act of greater virtue if he had. And methinks they should have told the world pretty smartly, that if Pharaoh had such a respect to the Egyptian priesthood as not to sell their land, Christian princes and governors should not be more unkind (if not unjust) in these days, nor expose to sale those lands which have been settled upon the priests of the most high God. But above all, I wonder at their profound silence in their notes upon Ezek. xlviii. 14, where one would think at last they would have broken it; especially since they might have done it pretty securely in such an obscure place, which few read. There the lands of the Levites are again forbidden to be sold: and by Levites, according to their own principles, we are to understand the ministers of the gospel, whose lands therefore ought not to be sold. I prove it clearly thus: in the beginning of their expli-

[x] Chap. vi. 19. [y] Josh. vii. 21.

cation of this vision, they lay down this for a foundation of their exposition[z], that herein was represented the ample and flourishing estate of Christ's church, under the types of the rebuilding of the temple, restoration of the Levitical worship and service, and the repossession and inhabitation of the whole land. Which they repeat again, chap. xliii. 1, and in sundry other places. If this be true, (as they believed it to be,) then according to their own rules, the assigning of land for the Levites must signify the care that ought to be taken to settle a maintenance for the support of the gospel ministry and service; and the prohibition against selling the Levites' lands must denote the pleasure of God, that the portion of land or other things settled upon the evangelical priesthood, or ministry, should never be alienated from them. Now I pray you tell me, why would they not open their mouths at last in so plain a case as this? What should be the cause that they do not so much as name this sin, much less bid the world beware of it, and still much less pass any sentence upon it? Do you think they did not know what was wont to be said on these places? Did they not understand well enough, that if they would write consequently to their own principles before laid down, they must either tax that sin in this place of Ezekiel, or else say just nothing? Why did they choose the latter, and pass it over without a word, but only referring us to two or three places of Scripture nothing to the purpose?

N. C. Truly I know not what to say.

C. I will tell you then. The most probable conjecture is that which I have made already, that they were afraid in the least to displease their masters who set them on work. The parliament would have taken it very ill, and all the good people too; who, to save their own purses, were content the church's lands should be sold, to carry on the war which they had illegally begun[a].

N. C. I hope better, and that you will not now take occasion,

[z] Ezek. xl. 2.

[a] [On June 21, 1641, a bill was introduced for the abolishing of archbishops, bishops, deans, and chapters, &c. and the sale of their lands, though not carried at that time. But an ordinance to that effect was passed, Oct. 9, and Nov. 16, 1646, for the execution of which a committee of trustees was appointed, and confirmed by patent under the great seal, Jan. 12, 1649.—Nalson, 300. Husband, 922, 932. Rushworth, 373, 376, 1390. Whitelocke, 224, 368. Clarendon, 110, 605, 680.]

from the mention you make of the war, to fall into a declamation against the other sin of rebellion.

C. Since you love not to hear any thing of it, I am content to be as silent as your ministers were wont to be: only let me tell you, I have observed several other things which they forbear, not because they think it is their duty, but for fear of displeasing a party.

N. C. What do you mean?

C. I mean, it was for this reason that they seldom or never (some of them) used the Lord's Prayer; because the people had been taught on a sudden to abhor forms, without remembering them that the Lord's prayer was a form[b]. It was not fit to tell them that, for fear they should have continued to like other forms of prayer for its sake. I observe also, that still they will by no means give the title of saint to one of the apostles or evangelists of our Lord, (though I think they will call them holy, which is the same,) no, not when they read a text out of their writings. For which I can conceive no other reason, but that their good dames and masters do not like it. They are afraid that it is popish. And rather than these men-servers will be at the pains of convincing them of their error, or, to speak more properly, rather than venture the danger of losing them, (for many might in a passion fly off, if they heard the name of *saint* given to any but themselves,) they will not offend their tender ears by naming that abominable word. And were it not that I am loath to tire you, I could instance in a great many other things wherein they are mere slaves to the humours of the people, and serve the time; not daring to say those things, or to use those

[b] ["Our Saviour Christ doth not there give us a prescript form of prayer, whereunto he bindeth us; but giveth us a rule and square to frame all our prayers by. I know it is necessary to pray, and pray often. I know also that in a few words it is impossible for any man to frame so pithy a prayer, and I confess that the church doth well in concluding their prayers with the Lord's Prayer; but I stand upon this, that there is no necessity laid upon us to use these very words and no more."—Cartwright, Answer to Whitgift, p. 176.

"Though it be true that Christ give us libertie to use that for a prayer, being uttered with understanding, yet his purpose is thereby to direct us how to frame all our prayers, and not to tye us to say over those words for our prayers."—The Tryall of the English Liturgie, &c., attributed to John Davenport, 4to. Lond. 1637. Compare Barrow's answer in the Examinations of Barrow, Greenwood, and Penry, p. 11.]

words, which they know are fit to be said and to be used, merely because many people will run away from them.

N. C. There is no danger of that. Whither should they run?

C. To our ministers: whom perhaps they forsook upon such little accounts, and so may return to them when they see others do like them.

N. C. Hold you content, neighbour. They will never return to one that is an apostate, and hath forsaken his principles. And that I am sure you will grant your minister hath done, though you will not have him called a time-server.

C. You have a company of the most frivolous exceptions against our ministry that ever I heard of. None of which (as I might have shown you all along) are sufficient to justify your separation from us, were they true. But being as they are, either false imputations, or else such things as no man need be ashamed of, you can the less be excused for your forsaking our assemblies. As for this you charge our minister withal, I have reason to think it is a forgery, and that he had never any other principles than he hath now. Or if he had, what do you say to those who stuck so fast to their principles, that it cost them all they were worth? Are there not a great number of these among our clergymen? and do you not hate these as much as any else? nay, look upon them as your old enemies, because you remember what enemies you were to them?

N. C. There are a great many, I am certain, that were once ours, and now are fallen away to you. Those I abhor a great deal more than your old clergy, and cannot endure to hear them [c].

[c] [An instance of the bitter spirit which prevailed against those who were held to apostatise by conforming to the church, may be seen in a letter addressed to Zachary Crofton, on the occasion of his attending the service of the Church of England, while a prisoner in the Tower, in the year 1661.

"Dear brother," say his anonymous censurers, who it appears had expressed sentiments equally violent in a personal interview with him: "you cannot enough believe, how much your renewed public communion with we know not whom, in the ordinances which they think cannot but be materially corrupt, especially in that place, hath grieved and alienated the hearts of the godly; not only members, but ministers. Defend it how we can, they censure it not only as impolitic, but impious, hardening our enemies, weakening our friends, undoing your good testimony, and giving away the cause, &c."—See his answer, entitled "Reformation, not Separation," 4to. Lond. 1662; and a tract in reply, "Jerub-baal Redivivus, by T. P." 4to. Lond. 1663.]

C. Suppose there may be many such, yet there is no reason for this strong antipathy against them. For it is like they were very young when they followed you, and may say, as St. Paul, *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought* (or reasoned) *as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*

N. C. Belike you think ours a childish religion.

C. Perhaps I do, and, for any thing you know, can prove it to be so in great part. But that is not our business now; which is only to show that it is no shame for anybody to think and speak otherwise than he did, provided his judgment be grown more ripe and manly. What! do you think youth must never examine the principles they receive with their education, nor judge for themselves when they are able? If you would not have them follow their masters or parents, as horses and asses do those that lead them in a string, why do you blame any of them that consider who it is that leads him, and whither he is carrying him? nay, that forsakes the track in which he hath always walked, when he finds it to be wrong?

N. C. Nay, a great many old men have forsaken their principles, who, one would think, should have had more wit or more honesty.

C. They have never the less for that; for I hope you are not too old to learn. And this is all you can make of it, that once they thought it unlawful to do according to their present practice; but days have taught them wisdom, and given satisfaction to their scruples. Beside, the extravagant freaks and the mad fantastic tricks which were played in religion when you reigned, opened many men's eyes (whom you have deluded by fair speeches and goodly pretences) to see their folly in condemning and cashiering bishops and common prayer.

N. C. You have an art of apologizing for any thing.

C. Let us see your skill in that art; for I would fain try it a little. What will you say, if none be found so guilty of this which you charge us withal as your own dear selves?

N. C. I will say that you can prove any thing.

C. No; you shall only say, that they have the least reason of all other men to talk against forsaking principles, who have done it so notoriously.

N. C. I cannot but wonder at your confidence. Are not

your very senses convinced of the contrary? Do you not see how they suffer for their consciences, how they are deprived of their liberty, and have lost good benefices? If they would have forsaken their principles, what needed they have been thus deprived?——

C. You need say no more, for I know it all beforehand. But pray be not you too confident, nor take it ill that I stop you thus in your career, since I think you will spend your breath to little purpose. Answer me soberly a few questions, and then perhaps you will thank me for saving you the pains you were about to take. Do you not remember a time when the Covenant was magnified as the most sacred thing in the world, next the holy Scriptures [d]? Did you never meet with such a passage as this in commendation of it; "This oath is such, and in the matter and consequence of it of such concernment, as I can truly say it is worthy of us, yea of all these kingdoms, yea of all the kingdoms of the world?" If you have not, it is to be found in Mr. Nye's Exhortation at the taking of the Covenant, September 25, 1643, pag. 2.[e]

[d] ["Had the Pope at Rome the knowledge of what is doing this day in England, and were this covenant written on the plaster of the wall, over against him, where he sitteth Belshazzar-like in his sacrilegious pompe, it would make his heart to tremble, his countenance to change, his head and miter to shake, his joynts to loose, and all his cardinals and prelates to be astonied."—Henderson's speech at the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant, p. 32. "It is the clearest that ever was penned here below, the finger of God is in it too. By help of that hand which wrote the Ten words first, this was indicted and written sure enough, for truly it is as the good word of God."—E. W. his Preface to the Solemn League. Quoted by Featley, "League Illegal," &c. p. 13. 4to. Lond. 1660.

A number of passages illustrating the tone of extravagant eulogy in which the Covenant was extolled in the writings of the time may be seen in L'Estrange's "Dissenters' Sayings," part 1. p. 18. ed. 3. 4to. Lond. 1681; and part 2. chap. 6. p. 34, 1681.]

[e] ["The Covenant, with a Narrative of the proceedings, and solemn manner of taking it by the honourable House of Commons, and reverend Assembly of Divines, the 25th day of September, at Saint-Margarets in Westminster: Also two speeches delivered at the same time; the one by Mr. Philip Nye, the other by Mr. Alexander Henderson. published by special order of the house. London, printed for Thomas Underhill at the Bible in Wood Street, 1643."

Lightfoot has left on record a full report of the ceremony observed at the solemn taking of the Covenant:—

"Monday, Sep. 25.—This morning being met, we had word presently after our sitting into assembly, that the house of commons were gone into St. Margaret's church, and so we went after them. And after a psalm given by Mr.

N. C. What of all this? is there any thing for which we more suffer than that holy Covenant?

C. Sure that gentleman and a great number beside (who now are followed and esteemed above "our changelings," as you are pleased to call them) have long since altered their minds, and reprobated that Covenant; or, to speak in his own words, "they have been found to purpose, nay more, to vow and to swear, and all this according to the flesh; so that with them there is, notwithstanding these obligations, *Yea, yea*, and *Nay, nay*;"—pag. 5[f]. A thing which he there accuses of great falseness and inconstancy, such as is not to be shown amongst us[g].

N. C. What do you tell me of Independents? We have nothing to do with them.

C. Yes, but you have; for it appears by your discourse, that your opinions now are a mixture of the fancies of more sects than theirs. And as for your ministers, it is plain that they are in part turned Independents, (which is a gross apostasy from their principles,) having congregations in several places that have no dependency one upon another.

Wilson, picking several verses, to suit the present occasion, out of several psalms, Mr. White prayed near upon an hour. Then he came down out of the pulpit, and Mr. Nye went up, and made an exhortation of another hour long. After he had done, Mr. Henderson, out of the seat where he sat, did the like; and all tended to forward the Covenant. Then Mr. Nye, being in the pulpit still, read the Covenant; and at every clause of it, the House of Commons, and we of the Assembly, lift up our hands, and gave our consent thereby to it, and then went all into the chancel, and subscribed our hands; and afterward we had a prayer by Dr. Gouge, and another psalm by Mr. Wilson, and departed into the Assembly again."—Lightfoot's Diary, Works, vol. xiii. p. 15. A less copious notice of the day's solemnity is contained in John Goodwin's MS. notes of the Assembly's proceedings, sess. 63. vol. i. in Dr. Williams' Library.]

[f] [P. 22.]

[g] ["Soon after," says Wood, who throws doubt upon the motives for Nye's change of sentiments, "disliking the proceedings of the said Assembly of divines, he dissented from them for a time, as others did, being incited thereunto by certain politicians, with promises of reward, especially if they would oppose them and their intended discipline to be settled. So that then closing with the rising party, the Independents, especially with the grandees of the army, he did by their powers hold rich offices, and his counsel in political affairs was often used by them."—Athen. Oxon. iii. 964. He became one of the chief instruments of Cromwell, accompanied the commissioners of the army to the King at Carisbrook Castle, in 1647, was appointed one of the triers in 1653, and at the restoration barely escaped, with Goodwin, from the sentence passed upon the regicides.]

N. C. They are forced to it.

C. If that be a good excuse, nobody will want an apology for his faults, which he will find there was some necessity or other for. But (I pray) do you not remember such a creature some years ago as the people called a *lay elder*, but by your ministers was named a *ruling elder?*

N. C. Yes.

C. And you remember it was disputed very hotly whether he were one of God's creatures or of man's[i].

N. C. Very well.

C. And the ministers whom you adhere to confidently affirmed that their ruling elders were by divine right, and ought to be admitted not only upon the account of prudence, but as seated by God in the church as church-officers. If you doubt of it, read the Vindication of Presbyterial Government, set forth 1649, from pag. 34 to pag. 55[k].

[i] ["Whether they saw it necessary for them so to persuade the people, without whose help they could do nothing; or else, (which I rather think,) the affection which they bare towards this new form of government, made them to imagine it God's own ordinance, their doctrine is that 'by the law of God there must be for ever in all congregations certain lay-elders, ministers of ecclesiastical jurisdiction,' inasmuch as our Lord and Saviour by testament (for so they presume) hath left all ministers or pastors in the church executors equally to the whole power of spiritual jurisdiction, and with them hath joined the people as colleagues." — Hooker, Eccles. Pol. vi. 1. § 3, referring to Travers' Eccles. Disc. fol. 120—125. See also Pref. iv. § 5. and the editor's remarks, Pref. p. xxix.]

The antiquity and apostolical institution of lay elders, which was laid down in the earlier stage of the controversy as the groundwork of the puritan or Genevan platform of discipline, is one of the points prominently dwelt upon by the Smectymnuan divines against Bishop Hall's Remonstrance, § 15. p. 71.]

[k] [After the ascendency of the independent party was generally established, and crowned by the act of parliament which enforced the Engagement on all people of the nation of eighteen years of age and upwards, (Dec. 28, 1649,) the presbyterians were subjected to great oppressions and discouragements. Among other enactments levelled against them was one forbidding ministers to meddle in their pulpits with state affairs; a committee was appointed to receive information against such as in their discourses vilified and aspersed the authority of parliament, and an act was passed visiting all such with the penalty of sequestration from their ecclesiastical preferments. (Whitelocke, p. 436. Neal, iv. 11.)

Previous to this the presbyterians made strenuous efforts in self-defence by means of protest and argument.

At the beginning of May 1649 the ministers of the fifth provincial assembly of London held a meeting at Sion College, Mr. Jackson of St. Michael's, Wood St., being moderator, at which a committee was appointed to prepare materials for a proof of the divine right of presbyterian church-government. The

N. C. I know their opinion well enough [1].

C. But can you tell me what is become of these creatures? doth not the whole species seem to be lost among you? What is the reason that we hear never a word of them?

N. C. They are still in their first principles.

C. You grow witty. But it will not serve your turn; for

proofs thus adduced and examined were approved in a meeting of the assembly held in the month of November following, of which Mr. G. Walker was moderator, Calamy and Arthur Jackson assessors, and Elidad Blackwell and Roger Dealy scribes. The treatise was forthwith published with this title: "A Vindication of the Presbyteriall-government, and ministry; together with an exhortation to all the ministers, elders, and people, within the bounds of the province of London, whether joyning with us, or separating from us, published by the ministers and elders met together in a provinciall assembly, Novemb. 2d, 1649." 4to. Lond. 1650.

[1] [In addition to the arguments drawn from the analogy of the Jewish sanhedrim, in which lay elders were associated with the sacerdotal order, the divine institution of ruling elders is based by the writers of the Vindication upon St. Paul's mention of *government*, 1 Cor. xii. 28, *him that ruleth*, Rom. xii. 8, and *the elders that rule well*, 1 Tim. v. 17, from which they infer, "that this church-government is seated by God in his church; it is a plant of God's own planting, and therefore shall stand firme, maugre all opposition ... that this church governour, seated by God in his church, is not only a *church-member*, but a *church-officer*. For though it be a question amongst the learned, whether some of the persons here named, as the *workers of miracles*, and those that had the *gift of healing, and of tongues*, were seated by God, as officers in the church, and not rather only as eminent members indued with these eminent gifts; yet it is most certain, that whosoever is seated by God in his church as a *church-governour*, must needs be a *church-officer*; for the nature of the gift doth necessarily imply an office."

"The church-governour is an ordinary and perpetuall officer in his church;" &c. pp. 33—39.

The tract is subscribed by the above-named moderator, assessors, and scribes, "in the name and by the appointment of the Assembly."

Arguments substantially the same, but with still more copious illustrations, scriptural and patristic, had been put forth in the treatise entitled "Jus Divinum Regiminis ecclesiastici, or the Divine Right of Church-government, asserted and evidenced by the Holy Scriptures, &c. by sundry ministers of the Church within the city of London;" as a semi-official reply to the questions propounded to the Assembly by parliament April 30, 1646, which were designedly drawn up by Selden with consummate ingenuity with a view to perplex and embarrass the advocates of the divine prerogatives of presbyters.

A later tract was issued with authority when the general body had ceased to exist, with the title, "Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici, or the Divine Right of the Gospel-Ministry," &c.; "published by the provincial Assembly of London," and subscribed by its officials, Nov. 2, 1653. with "speciall thanks to Mr. Gataker, Mr. Calamy, and Mr. Cranford, for their great paines in the booke."—Goodwin's MS. Notes.]

I should think the principles are lost as well as they; else what is the cause you have none of them in your private congregations, where you may do what you list? Either you have deserted those principles, or else your Covenant, which I am sure you thought bound you to maintain these. Choose which part you will; for either of them will serve my turn.

N. C. I never trouble my head much about those seniors, and therefore do not much care what is become of them.

C. But you should think what is become of your ministers' principles, who, I believe, are content now to let the lay elders die; they being but the creatures of men, and so of a mortal nature.

N. C. It is no great matter if they do, and never rise again.

C. Good. But I have another question to ask you. Was not there a time when this was a principle among your ministers, "that they should obey the orders of the magistrate under whom they lived, if they were not sinful?"

N. C. I am not much acquainted with their opinions in those matters.

C. You may know them then by their practices, (which I suppose you will by all means have to be consistent with their principles.)

N. C. What practices?

C. I think there were orders in the late times[j] that no man

[j] [It seems uncertain whether the author refers to the times before or after the death of Charles I. Many ministers are known to have incurred penalties for offering up prayers for Charles II., under the commonwealth. This was the case with Thomas Cawton rector of St. Bartholomew's, who for having introduced a petition for the king and royal family, while preaching before the lord mayor at the Mercers' chapel, in Feb. 1648, was declared guilty of high treason and punished with six months imprisonment in the Gate-house.—Life of Cawton, p. 27.

The following comment is made upon the present passage by the author of the anonymous "Humble apology for non-conformists, with modest and serious reflections on the Friendly Debate, and the continuation thereof:"—

"Mr. Cawton prayed for his majesty with his royal titles, in public, and for his so doing was accused and arraigned of high treason; others of them in private prayed for him, would not own the government that then usurped over us, nor keep their day of thanksgiving for the victory at Dunbar or Worcester, nor publish their declarations against his majesty or sir George Booth, and those that endeavoured his restoration: yea there are to be found among the present non-conforming ministers who had like to have been hanged for engaging with sir George Booth, and hardly escaped with their lives then, who have since lost their livings."—p. 28.]

should pray publicly for king Charles, and they obeyed them. They were required also to keep a thanksgiving for the victories at Dunbar and Worcester, with which I believe the most, if not all, complied[k]. Nay, that thanksgiving was repeated every year at Whitehall; and I believe Cromwell found some among you that would not deny to carry on the work of that day[l].

N. C. What do you infer from hence?

C. That they have forsaken their principles: for now they will not obey the king's orders. Mark what I say; they would obey usurpers because they had a power for the time being, and now they disobey their sovereign whose power they acknowledge to be just, and who commands things that are not unlawful. As for example, they will not hear common prayer (at least many of them do not) which they can if they list: nor will they observe an holy day, which is no more unlawful to be kept, one would think, than one of those thanksgivings. Give me a reason, for instance, why the nine and twentieth of September may not as well be observed as the third sometime was.

N. C. That day is observed for superstitious purposes; to remember the victory of Michael over the dragon.

C. Suppose it were. Is not that a great deal better than to remember the victory of Cromwell over the king?

N. C. That was but once and away.

C. But once all over the city and kingdom, yet every year at Whitehall: but why is not that lawful to be done alway which we may do once, the reason continuing still the same?

N. C. You love to rip up old things which had better be forgotten.

C. Not I: but you force me to it by reflecting upon the old

[k] ["On Sept. 9th order was made "for a day of thanksgiving throughout the kingdom for the success at Worcester" on the 3rd, and on the 24th an act was made "for a yearly observation of that day in all the three kingdoms with a narrative of the grounds thereof."—Whitelocke, 508, 510.]

[l] [The third of September was held by Cromwell a day of happy augury, being the anniversary of his victory at Dunbar in 1650, and at Worcester in 1651. By a remarkable coincidence, much dwelt upon by writers both of his own and the adverse party, it proved the day of his death in 1658.

"The Rump made an order that all ministers should keep their days of humiliation, to fast and pray for their success in Scotland, and their days of thanksgiving for their victories there upon pain of sequestration."—Calamy's Abridgement of Baxter's Life, p. 106.]

principles of some of our men. And how can one choose (upon such an occasion) but take notice of the fantasticalness of your men's consciences, at least some of them) that are so nice and squeamish in some fits, and at another time can swallow any thing?

N. C. I do not see but they are the same.

C. That is strange; when they are so scrupulous now, and were so little scrupulous then: or at least could do things with a reluctance and regret, and perhaps some fears and doubts in their minds in those days; and now nothing will serve them but perfect satisfaction. If you would have me speak plain, and show you the difference between things they did then and those they will not do now, I will take the pains.

N. C. Save yourself the labour, I have no mind to hear more of it.

C. That is, you have no mind to see how they have left their principles, or at least do not act according to them.

N. C. They know their own principles better than you.

C. Would they would let us know something of them, that so we might have a reason for some other alterations we see in them.

N. C. What are they?

C. Did you never hear them cry out against separation and forsaking of public ordinances[m]? were there not many books writ to this purpose, when they possessed the pulpit?

[m] [Speaking of "unadvised separation," a very moderate presbyterian complains, "In the civil state how many divisions and factions have broke in at this hour! even to the dividing and breaking the nearest relations, betwixt masters and servants, parents and children, husbands and wives. In the ecclesiastical state, in the business of the church, what a stop, what a hinderance hath this been! The churches sayls were filled with a fair gale for reformation, but this *remora* how hath it stayed her course! Besides, what an inlet hath it been to all sorts of pernicious errors and heresies, wherewith this land at this day is annoyed and as much as Egypt ever was with lice or flies!"—The Arraignment of the present schism of new separation in old England," by John Brinsley, p. 53, 4to. Lond. 1646.

"But one trouble (next to the ignorance and badness that we found most parishes in) was antichurches, or separatists, that in great towns and where they found entertainment, did gather congregations out of the parochial congregations; which being gathered on pretence that the communion of our churches was unlawful, employed so much of their preaching and converse in labouring to prove it so, and in magnifying their own opinions and ways and vilifying others, as made many towns become places of mere strife, that I say not of almost hostility.

N. C. I perceive whither you are going.

C. And you shall not stir, but go along with me. Consider, I beseech you, what are become of those principles, or how much are their present practices condemned by them? Do they not keep private meetings every week, and that in the time of the public service, as I told you before? Are they not thereby kept from church themselves, and do they not thereby keep away a great many others? Tell me (good neighbour), what is this but a downright separation from us?

N. C. They are not for a separation from Christ's ordinances, but from yours.

C. Ours are Christ's ordinances as much as any you frequent, for we pray and give thanks to God in his name: and we do this according to his appointment, praying only for such things as he would have us, and no other. As for words, I hope you grant that neither yours nor ours know any ordained by him but the Lord's prayer, which we use, and you perhaps do not[n]. And as for ceremonies, I know those very men now

These separating antichurches were of divers sorts: but of these it was two parties that most hindered our concord and success: the Laudian Prelatists, and the rigid Independents."—Baxter's Preface to his "Church Concord," published in 1691. The first part of the work was written in 1655, the second in 1667.

"And all this began but in unwarrantable separation, and too much aggravating the faults of the churches and common people, and Common Prayer Book, and ministry: which indeed were none of them without faults to be lamented and amended. But they thought that whatever needed amendment required their obstinate separation, and that they were allowed to make odious any thing that was amiss; and because it was faulty, if any man had rebuked them for belying it, and making it far more faulty than it was; instead of confessing their sin, they called their reprover a pleader for Antichrist or Baal. Every error in the mode of the common worship they had no fitter name for than Idolatry, Popery, Antichristianism, Superstition, Will-worship, &c. When in the meantime many of their own prayers were full of carnal passion, selfishness, faction, disorder, vain repetitions, unsound and loathsome expressions, and their doctrine full of errors and confusion. And these beams in their own eyes were matter of no offence to them".—Calamy, chap. 6. p. 95. A similar strain of complaint runs through various earlier writings by Bradshaw, Giffard, J. Paget, Hildersham, Brightman, Abbot's Tryall of Church Forsakers, and the Vindication of Presbyterial government.]

[n] [A sermon preached at St. Mary Woolnoth June 11, 1643 by Peter Bales, rector, entitled "Oratio Dominica, or the Lord's Prayer pleading for better entertainment in the church of England," gives utterance in the preface to the complaint, "that in this our land it is either blasphemously contemned by the separatists, wilfully rejected, or impudently neglected."]

separate from us, who heretofore approved those books which were writ against separation upon the account of ceremonies. and, whatsoever you imagine, they do not think our public ordinances (as they now stand) are antichristian, or that it is unlawful to be present at them. Therefore I must have a better reason for their separation from our assemblies, or else you must confess that they (not we) have changed their principles.

N. C. I doubt not but they have a reason.

C. No more do I. They have without question a great many; but they are "carnal reasons."

N. C. Why are you so censorious?

C. I am content they should have other reasons; but I speak according to your conceptions of them.

N. C. You are very mysterious on a sudden.

C. Methinks the matter is plain. If they have sound reasons to alter their principles, then we have done. If they have not, what reasons can they be but carnal ones which alter their practice?

N. C. I do not love to hear you talk thus.

C. Nor do I love to hear myself talk thus; but you constrain me to it. And (I pray you), whether you love it or no, do so much as hear me one word more.

N. C. You may speak your mind.

C. Was there not a time when your ministers would by no means hear of liberty of conscience[o]? Did they not cry out upon

[o] [The great principle of toleration, or freedom of religious opinion, had obtained too little hold upon the public mind, nor had controversy reached a phase sufficiently advanced, for so early a recognition of the truth, that the attempt to control moral conviction by material force is not less futile than unjustifiable. This idea had never been promulgated on an authoritative basis, or in systematic form, until the production in the year 1647 of the most original, perhaps the ablest, of the writings of Jeremy Taylor, The Liberty of Prophesying, "the first attempt on record," in the language of his biographer, "to conciliate the minds of Christians to the reception of a doctrine, which, though now the rule of action professed by all Christian sects, was then by every sect alike regarded as a perilous and portentous novelty."

"There is abundant proof" (continues Heber) "in the history of the times, that (much as every religious party in its turn had suffered from persecution, and loudly and bitterly as each had in its own particular instance complained of the severities exercised against its members) no party had yet been found to perceive the great wickedness of persecution in the abstract, or the moral unfitness of temporal punishment as an engine of religious con-

it in their pulpits and their books, and call it "cursed toleration?" Read but a book called "A Testimony to the truth of Jesus Christ, and to our solemn league and covenant," &c. subscribed by the ministers of the province of London, Decemb. 14, 1647[p]. There you will find that among other abominable errors and damnable heresies (as they are called, p. 4,) this is condemned for one, p. 22; "That little can be done, unless liberty of conscience be allowed for every man and sort of men to worship God in that way, and perform the ordinances of Christ in that manner, as shall appear to them most agreeable to God's word," &c.[q] This, among others, they call "a horrid and prodigious

troversy. Even the sects who were themselves under oppression exclaimed against their rulers, not as being persecutors at all, but as persecuting those who professed the truth; and each sect, as it obtained the power to wield the secular weapon, esteemed it also a duty as well as a privilege, 'not to bear the sword in vain.'"—Life of Taylor, p. xxix.

But if the first complete vindication of the tenet proceeded from the bosom of the church, it must be allowed that the title to the first practical exemplification of it rests with the body of Independents. On this side not only were arrayed the grave eloquence of Owen, and the powers of Milton in prose and verse, but their party, when in the ascendant, were beyond doubt the most uniformly consistent in practising those maxims of tolerance, for which they had stipulated in their day of weakness and oppression. Under no government, up to the time of the revolution in 1688, was liberty so broadly extended to opinions, when divested of political and social relations, as under that of Cromwell. Rigid and merciless as was the rule of the Protector, even to the extermination of those sects whose theory and practice were notably incompatible with the existing form of civil government, there is no evidence of any interdiction of purely spiritual freedom such as to contravene the primary declaration of the council of war, Dec. 25, 1648, "for a toleration of all religions." Walker, History of Independency, ii. 50.]

[p] [This appeal was signed by 39 of the city clergy assembled at Sion college, Dec. 14, 1647; in which among other opinions they denounce the error of "Toleration, patronising and promoting all other heresies and blasphemies whatsoever, under the grossly abused notion of Liberty of Conscience."]

[q] [The extract in question is from a little Independent tract "the Compassionate Samaritane, or Liberty of Conscience asserted, and the Separatist vindicated," the second enlarged edition of which was published in 12mo, 1644.

Several passages from the writings of John Goodwin having been selected for their censure, a reply was shortly published by him, "Sion-college visited, in some briefe animadversions upon a pamphlet lately published under the title of a Testimonie to the truth of Jesus Christ, and to the solemne League and Covenant, &c. subscribed (as is pretended) by the ministers of Christ within the province of London &c. by John Goodwin, a servant of God and men, in the gospel of Jesus Christ." 4to. Lond. 1648.

A rejoinder to this was put forth

opinion;" and tell us (p. 32 and 33.) that it will "lay the glory of the most high God in the dust, if it take place, and raze the truth of Christ to the ground, and overthrow all Christ's ordinances, and together therewith magistrates and ministers, and all religious and comely order," &c. In short, they say we shall be disowned by all reformed churches, who will cry out, "Is this England, who covenanted to extirpate popery, prelacy, superstition, schism, &c. and after so long travail hath she now brought forth an hideous monster of toleration[q]?"

N. C. I know all this as well as you can tell me: and they are of the same mind still; for this was writ only against an "universal toleration of all sects," which they abhor.

C. I can tell you another story. They would not so much as tolerate five poor men, who professed to agree with them in all matters of doctrine. Judge then what their opinions were about liberty, when they would not allow it to so few dissenting brethren[r].

by one of the subscribing clergy, William Jenkin or Jenkins, minister of Christ Church, entitled, "The busie bishop, or visitor visited. 4to. Lond. 1648."]

[q] [The following extract will further exemplify the tone of invective indulged in by the leaders of the presbyterian party:

"Toleration is destructive to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, therefore whoever should bestir a toleration, ministers ought to be against it. If the parliament, city, yea, and all the people, were for a toleration of all sects, as Anabaptists, Antinomians, Seekers, Brownists, and Independents, yet ministers ought to present their reasons against it, preach and cry out of the evil of it, never consent to it; but protest against it, and withstand it by all lawful ways and means within their power, venturing the loss of liberties, estates, lives, and all in that cause, and inflame us with zeal against a toleration, the great Diana of the sectaries."

"A toleration is the grand design of the devil, his master piece and chief engine he works by to uphold his tottering kingdom. Other evils, whether errors of judgment or practice, are only against some few places of scripture or religion: but this is against all. This is the Abaddon, Apollion, the destroyer of all religion, the abomination of desolation and astonishment, the liberty of perdition: therefore the devil follows it night and day, and all the devils in hell, and their instruments, are at work to promote a toleration."— Edwards' Gangræna, part i. pp. 59, 86. The same furious strain is maintained throughout another tract of his on this special subject, "The casting down of this last and strongest hold of Satan, or a treatise against toleration," 1647.

Instances of the same intolerant spirit might be indefinitely multiplied from the pamphlets of the time. But the most systematic defence of persecution was that put forth in 1649. "A Free Disputation against pretended Liberty of Conscience," by Samuel Rutherford, principal and professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrew's.]

[r] [The Independents or Congregationalists, generally designated by

N. C. That was a great while ago, and most of those strait-laced men are dead.

C. No such matter. But if they were, their principles did not die with them, but survived in their followers. And yet now all on a sudden they are vanished. Now they are for liberty of conscience. By which if they mean only a liberty for themselves, let them speak out, that all their brethren of the separation may hear them. And withal let them acquaint us by what title they claim this favour, more than the rest of the sects that are sprung from them; who might take the liberty to separate from them, as well as they take the liberty to separate from us. And before they prove that it is due to them, let them first answer their own argument against the Independents, (which I can show them in a Letter of the London Ministers to the Assembly of Divines,) which was this; "that to grant a toleration to them, and not to other sectaries, will be counted injustice[s]."

the name of the Dissenting Brethren, formed at first but a small section of the Assembly, their whole number being but five, according to the general account, though Baillie, (ii. 110.) speaks of there being "ten or eleven in the synod, many of them very able men." They met with the severest opposition from the presbyterian party, and could with difficulty obtain a bare toleration from the assembled body. "But the Presbyterians," says Fuller, "highly opposed their toleration; and such who desired most ease and liberty for their sides when bound with episcopacy, now girt their own government the closest about the consciences of others. They tax the 'dissenting brethren' for singularity, as if these men (like the five senses of the church) should discover more in matter of discipline than all the Assembly besides; some moving their ejection out of the same, except in some convenient time they would comply therewith." C. H. vol. vi. p. 282.

The five members had then recourse to a petition to parliament, styled by them "An Apologetical Narration of some ministers formerly exiles in the Netherlands, now members of the Assembly of divines, humbly presented to the honourable houses of parliament," licensed by Charles Herle, and subscribed with their names, Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Burroughs, and William Bridge. "Sure it is," continues Fuller, "that at the present these petitioners found such favour with some potent persons in parliament, that they were secured from further trouble, and from lying in a posture of defence are now grown able not only to encounter, but invade all opposers; yea, to open and shut the door of preferment to others." The personal influence of those able leaders of that party in conclave, together with the growing weight of independent interests in the long parliament and the army, had the effect ultimately of throwing the supreme power into their hands.]

[s] ["A letter of the Ministers of the City of London, presented the first of January 1645. to the Reverend Assembly of Divines, sit-

N. C. I perceive you are of a persecuting spirit.

C. You rather discover yourself of a turbulent spirit; which cannot forbear to trouble and confound even our discourse. For that is not the business, whether all restraint of men's liberty be persecution; nor whether I am for it or no: but to show you that once your ministers were of such a spirit as you call *persecuting*, and now are not.

N. C. Then they are changed for the better.

C. You should have said, Then they are changed, (which was the thing we were speaking of;) whether for the better or no, that is another question: and let them, if you please, resolve it. I believe they will not confess they were of a persecuting spirit, when they were against the liberty which they now claim.

N. C. What, do you make them of no principles at all?

C. Do not mistake me so. They are constant to some principles, particularly this, "that all is well done that they do, though quite contrary to what they did before."

N. C. You are bitter.

C. Do you like this principle better, (which they will not forsake, I warrant you,) "that they are in God's way, and therefore ought to be tolerated: whereas all other are out of his way, and therefore ought not to be tolerated?"

N. C. You much offend me by these reflections.

C. I will tell you another, then, that is more moderate, and will please you better: "that they must by all means keep you from coming to church; for fear you should see that you may be as well taught elsewhere as in their private meetings."

N. C. I told you before, there is no danger of that.

C. But you told me no reason, as I have shown you, that is worth any thing.

N. C. We have one that will never suffer us to come to church more, as long as your ministers are there.

C. What terrible scarecrow should that be?

N. C. To tell you the truth, many of us do not think that they are ministers.

C. Now you have revealed the bottom of your heart—— Pardon me that sudden conclusion; you may have more yet

ting at Westminster by authority of Parliament, against Toleration." Dated from Sion Coll. London, Decemb. 18, 1645. See p. 3.]

lurking behind, which you have not told me. I should rather have said, Now you have revealed your unskilfulness more than ever. For what have any of yours to qualify them for the ministry which ours have not as well as they? If you require the inward motions of the Spirit of God inclining a man to devote himself to this work, (which some of you think is enough,) this ours profess to have felt, us you may see in the form of ordering priests. If it be further necessary to be approved by presbyters, and to have their hands laid on them; this is not wanting to ours, as you may there also be satisfied.

N. C. But the bishop lays on his hands also.

C. And can this unhallow them, when they are so dedicated to God?

N. C. Yes; so I am told.

C. Then you would sooner believe what one of your own party says without any reason, than what we say with all the reason in the world: which is plainly partial affection.

N. C. Why so?

C. Is it not apparent that a bishop is a presbyter too? though we think him more.

N. C. You acknowledge a distinction of persons in the church, which is antichristian.

C. Nay, then I have done with you. You condemn all the ancient church of antichristianism; and more than that, the very apostles themselves and the evangelists, who, it is manifest, had some superiority over their brethren. But observe whither you are run, having once left your way. You mix the very dregs of all other sects with your own; and believe any thing that makes against us, even such things as the minister you com-

[t] ["Qu. But why have we no true ministry? Here possibly the same will cry out upon us as Antichristians, charging us, that we have received our calling from Rome, viz. by the imposition of the hands of those who had their calling and ordination from thence. Answ. As for them, I shall put them and the church of Rome together to debate the point, and so leave them. The church of Rome challengeth us, that we are no true ministers. Why? Because we have not received our ordination from them. The Separatist, on the other hand, here cryes out upon us, we are no true ministers. Why? Because we have received our ordination thence."—Brinsley's Arraignment of the present schism of new separation in old England, p. 31. 4to. Lond. 1646.

"We could tell you of a martyr that said it was the mark of the beast to receive from the bishop a license to preach."—Vindication of the Answer to the Humble Remonstrance by Smectymnuus, p. 33.]

monly hear would be ashamed to say. First, you only disliked the common prayer; then you did not love the man that read it; next you would not come to hear him: and now you will not allow him to be a minister; nay, rather than suffer him to enjoy that name, you will venture to deprive apostolical men of their office, who exercise an authority over their brethren.

N. C. Suppose they did; yet they were not lords.

C. No, nor do we ordain any lords when we make bishops. That is an honour which the king doth them, to qualify them to sit in parliament, and advise about the affairs of the realm; in which they are as much concerned as other men.

N. C. If their lordships would preach more, perhaps we might like them better.

C. I doubt not. For those that do, you will not come to hear.

N. C. Their lawn-sleeves offend us.

C. And why should you not as well take offence at the white cap and the lace which I have often seen under the black upon your ministers' heads.

N. C. Any thing becomes a godly man.

C. I thought thither would be your retreat. But why are not the bishops godly too?

N. C. They do not love and encourage good men.

C. You still suppose none are good but yourselves; which is no great token of that modesty and humility which we think necessary to make a godly man. But suppose any of them should be so bad as not to countenance the very best among us, but rather the worst; yet this would be only the fault of the men, not of the office.

N. C. I have often heard that distinction; but I could never love your logic.

C. Yes, sometimes. For you once liked a more subtle distinction than this, and that was between the king's personal and politic capacity[u] ——

[u] ["But that which served their turns best was a new distinction which they had coined between the personal and political capacity of the supreme magistrate: alledging that the king was present with the houses of parliament in his political capacity, though in his personal at York. That they might fight against the king in his personal capacity, though not in his politic; and consequently might destroy Charles Stuart without hurting the king." —Heylin, Hist. of the Presbyterians, lib. xiii. p. 439.

"We have the king's virtual con-

N. C. Pray forbear to scratch those old sores. But why do your bishops oppose all praying by the Spirit?

C. I thought you might come to that at last; and I fancy it is the great quarrel you have with them.

N. C. Verily it is.

C. Then let me assure you the bishops are the furthest of any men in the world from opposing praying by the Spirit.

N. C. You tell me a thing incredible. I should come sometimes to hear your ministers, but that they have not the spirit of prayer; which the bishops (I suppose) suppress and keep down all they can.

C. Belike then you think that to pray by the Spirit, and to have a spirit of prayer, are all one.

N. C. Why not? I know no difference.

C. Because I am sure ours have a spirit of prayer[x]: but

sent thereunto: for though he be not present in person at the parliament, nor hath given his royal assent under his hand; yet this parliament is called and continued by his authority, and his consent is virtually contained in the votes of both houses."—The Covenanter's answer, in Featley's League Illegal, p. 16. 4to. 1660.

"Now to fight against the parliament is to fight against the king and this kingdom both at once: against the king, because the parliament is the king's court, and his highest court, from whence there is no appeal; and therefore they who oppose that court are guilty of the highest rebellion, because they oppose the king's highest power and authority. The parliament then fighting for the maintenance of the king's authority in that court, and the cavaliers fighting against it, is clear and evident that the parliament fight for the king, and the cavaliers against him; because they that oppose the king's authority in his court, do manifestly oppose the king. And if the king in person be so far seduced as to oppose the authority of that court, we ought not to assist the king in opposing of his firm authority, for by that means we should disobey his authority, that we might obey his pleasure, which every wise man and good subject will count most absurd."—The Un-Deceiver, printed for Samuel Gellibrand, at the sign of the Brazen-serpent, in Paul's Church-yard, 4to. 1643.

"Nothing stuck with those of the more wise and honest sort, but the word Treason, which they knew they should incur by assisting the parliament against the king. But this doubt was presently wiped away in the opinion of many, by the parliament's distinction betwixt the person and office of a king, as also by their daily protestations at the beginning of the wars, that they fought not against the king, but against his wicked council."—History of the wicked Plots and Conspiracies of our Pretended Saints, by Henry Foulis, p. 142; who has collected numerous illustrations of this specious reasoning of the parliamentary leaders, from the declarations and other documents put forth by authority of the houses.]

[x] ["This way of praying by the Spirit, as they call it, was begun and first brought into use here in England in queen Elizabeth's days, by

neither ours nor yours can pray by the Spirit. If they could, the bishops would rather suffer martyrdom than oppose it.

N. C. I apprehend you not.

C. Very likely: for I see you have been nourished with phrases, but understand very little.

N. C. Pray try if you can make me understand more, since it seems you are so skilful.

C. Hear me quietly then, and I will tell you what I have learned. For my skill is only borrowed from such good men as our parish priest; whom you (I doubt) sometime deride and scornfully call by that name.

N. C. I am in no passion: speak your mind.

C. Tell me then, when a man reverently addresses himself to God; seriously acknowledges his authority over all; his power, wisdom and goodness, professes to depend upon him entirely; dreads his displeasure; waits upon him for his grace and favour; hungers and thirsts after righteousness; and devoutly renders his thanks to the possessor of heaven and earth for all his benefits: hath he the spirit of prayer, or no?

N. C. I cannot say but he hath; if his heart go along with his lips.

C. Then our ministers have the spirit of prayer; for in all appearance, and as far as we can judge, they have an inward sense of these things when they pray. And as for their words and gestures, they are generally more reverent and becoming than yours.

N. C. Methinks you should not be of that mind.

C. Truly I have heard such bold, and sometimes rude things spoken by some of yours in prayer, that I could not think they

a popish priest and Dominican friar, one Faithful Commin by name, who counterfeiting himself a protestant, and a zealot of the highest form, set up this new spiritual way of praying, with a design to bring the people first to a contempt, and from thence to an utter hatred and disuse of our common prayer: which he still reviled as only a translation of the mass, whereby to distract men's minds, and to divide our church. And this he did with such success, that we have lived to see the effects of his labours in the utter subversion of church and state. Which hellish negotiation, when this malicious hypocrite came to Rome to give the pope an account of, he received of him (as so notable a service well deserved), besides a thousand thanks, two thousand ducats for his pains. So that now you see here the original of this extempore way of praying by the Spirit."—South, serm. 15. vol. i. p. 425. Compare Nalson's Foxes and Firebrands, pp. 7, 17; Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, pref. p. 15; and Dr. Scott in the Collection of Cases by Divines of the city of London, p. 263.]

had any sense and feeling of God at all at that time. Their gestures also were ridiculous. Nay, I have seen some of them look about upon the people (to see, I suppose, how they were affected), when they should have turned their eyes toward heaven. Which was an argument to me they had something else in their mind then more than God.

N. C. Then it seems you hear them sometimes.

C. Not now. But I have heard them heretofore, when they preached in our churches.

N. C. O! but if you could hear them now, you would say they are full of the Spirit.

C. Because they pour out such abundance of words.

N. C. No, but they are more earnest than ever; and they plead with God after a more effectual manner.

C. You call loudness of speech earnestness; which I always took to be the ardent desire of our souls after that good which we humbly beg of God. And as for their pleading with God, I think it is rather sauciness.

N. C. Now you are bitter.

C. If I thought so, I should condemn myself as much as you can do; for I have learned, that we ought to *put away all wrath, bitterness, clamour, and evil-speaking.* Nay, if I thought I had done amiss, I would ask forgiveness, not only from God, but from you too.

N. C. That is a good mind. But why did you use such an harsh expression? Is it not one of Job's words[y]?

C. Yes, but not in your sense. For he would willingly have maintained his innocency, and have had his case argued, that he might make it appear he was not so guilty as his friends made him: which is nothing to your purpose; who, I suppose, do not intend (though you call Jesus Christ a days-man between God and us) to stand upon your defence, and justify yourselves before him. This you think too great a boldness, do you not?

N. C. Yes.

C. Why then may I not call it a sauciness in you to do a great deal more; I mean, to question God so much as you are wont? and to ask him over and over again what is the reason he doth not this or that, and why he suffers you to be so and so, and how he can deny you this or the other thing?

N. C. Doth not David sometimes ask questions?

[y] Job xvi. 21.

C. Yes, in a great agony of spirit, and upon some great occasion: which will not warrant you to take this unheard of boldness. So I call it; because things done in imitation of others, when we are not in that condition, and have not that occasion, and that spirit also which they had, are very fulsome; no better than the motions of a monkey, when he imitates a man. To do those things also commonly which those great men did now and then, is monstrously unbeseeming. Besides, his Psalms are pieces of Divine poetry; in which passions are wont to be expressed much otherwise than they ought to be in plain and familiar speech. And yet you not only venture to use their figures of speech, but you go beyond them; like a man that having lit upon a good figure in rhetoric, will never have done with it, but is always touching upon it. Than which nothing can be more absurd, especially if he heap a great many of these figures together, as your manner is, asking God over and over again (as I said), why he doth not this or that, and when he will do it. Besides, that which in a great agony (as I said) is very decent to be spoken, doth not befit a man's mouth at another time; but they that go about to imitate it do a thing unnatural. And the truth is, you seem to me to endeavour by these questions to put yourselves and the people into a great passion, and a kind of agony; but they do not spring (I persuade myself) nor arise of themselves from any ardency of devotion. But there is another thing that offends me more than all this; that having stirred up some confused passions in yourselves by this and other suchlike means, you proceed to such an high degree of confidence in this bold way of arguing with God, that you quite forget who you are speaking to. For some have told him that he little knew how his enemies insulted, (or some such thing;) and that if he did but know how desirous they were of such a thing, or how much they would prize it, he would not deny them.

N. C. Pray, sir, hold your peace, or I will stop my ears. You abuse good men.

C. I tell you only what is credibly reported: and if it be not so, I shall be very glad. But I must add, that they take such a liberty of saying any thing to God which they would say to one another, that I conceive it not unlikely that some might fall into those unseemly (others perhaps will call them blasphemous) expressions. Are not you of the same mind?

N. C. I cannot deny but that they use great familiarity with God [z].

C. Familiarity do you call it? Would the world had never known it: for it is such a one as hath bred in men's minds a contempt of God and religion. It hath taught everybody to let that member loose which ought to be always bridled, especially in God's presence. They vent all their foolish opinions to him; they tell him news, and inform him how things go abroad, which they have received many times upon a false report: which hath brought such a scandal upon religion, that it cannot but grieve any good man's heart to think on it [a].

N. C. It is such as you that have brought religion into contempt, and not we.

C. How so, I pray you?

N. C. By despising the Spirit.

C. It is false; we reverence that Spirit which was in the apostles; and if we could see such an one again, none would entertain it with greater gladness. We acknowledge also the power of the Spirit of God still in the hearts of men, especially of those who are good; and we bless God continually for it.

[z] ["Our Saviour Christ will have set before us most amiable names (of a Father and a Friend) when we come to prayer; to engender in us a reverent *familiarity* with him. And the boldness that the children of God ought to have so much passeth that which we use to any of our most dearest friends, as we are more assured of his love than of theirs." —Cartwright, Answer to Whitgift, p. 204. "Oh happy mixture," says Hooker on this passage, "wherein things contrary do so qualify and correct the one the danger of the other's excess, that neither boldness can make us presume as long as we are kept under with the sense of our own wretchedness; nor, while we trust in the mercy of God through Christ Jesus, fear be able to tyrannize over us! As therefore our fear excludeth not that boldness which becometh saints, so if their *familiarity* with God do not savour of this fear, it draweth too near that irreverent confidence wherewith true humility can never stand."—Eccles. Pol. v. 47. §. 4. vol. ii. p. 200.]

[a] ["They present to God immodest irreverent prayers; for they doe sollicit God in such homely, rude, and sawcy language as they dare not tender to men: they are so familiar with him as (in their prayers) to tell him newes out of their Weekly Intelligencer; so that their diurnals and corantoes stand them in great stead. In this their immodest carriage and behaviour they imitate that sawcy fellow whom Saint Chrisostome reprehendeth, who when he prayed expressed his necessity in such a manner as if God had beene ignorant of it."—Oratio Dominica, or the Lord's Prayer pleading for better entertainment in the Church of England, a sermon preached at Saint Mary Woolnoth, Jun. 11, 1643, by Peter Bales, rector, p. 13.]

But that which we deny is this, that either you or we are able (as I told you) to pray by the Spirit.

N. C. Do you not then despise the Spirit?

C. No; we suppose there is no such thing as prayer by the Spirit: if there were, we should reverence it.

N. C. Would you would tell me your meaning!

C. I mean a prayer immediately dictated by the Holy Ghost, as some were in the apostles' days.

N. C. I understand you not.

C. Such a prayer, in which by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost a man conceives those things which he speaks to God. Or (in plainer terms) I mean, that the Spirit of God doth not now suggest to any of us (when we pray) the very matter and words which we utter. If you pretend to this, then those prayers are as much the word of God as any of David's Psalms, or as any part of the Bible; and (being written from your mouths) may become canonical Scripture.

N. C. But we do not pretend to this.

C. I wish then you would not talk as if you did. I am sure your discourses of prayer are commonly such, that one would think you took yourselves to be full of the Holy Ghost. And this I must tell you hath made a great many scorn religion, when they saw the Spirit of God entitled to such pitiful stuff as they heard many vent with the greatest confidence.

N. C. This is their own fault.

C. And yours too.

N. C. I cannot believe that our prayers ever had any such effect.

C. But I can, and I will tell you how. You constantly tell us that the bishops, by prescribing a form, limit and stint the Spirit. By which Spirit you mean the Spirit of God, not your own. From whence it follows, that you think (or would have the world think) that the Spirit of God speaks in you when you pray, and that you utter its mind and words. Now many men hearing you pray so inconsiderately and wildly, uttering most absurd (if not impious) things, yet with a mighty zeal and confidence, have been tempted to think that whatsoever is said of the Spirit, even in the apostles' days, might possibly be no more than such an extravagance and fury as this[b].

[b] [There can scarcely be a stronger instance of the arrogant and irreverent tone adopted in their public devotions by the separatists, even

N. C. A most senseless conceit.

C. I think so too. But you have given occasion to such conceits in those that are inclined to infidelity.

N. C. I hope not. For we only mean, when we say we pray by the Spirit, that the Holy Ghost assists us.

C. With what? Doth it furnish you with words?

N. C. No, with devout and ardent affections.

C. This indeed you should mean; but your brags of the Spirit import more.

N. C. Pray, sir, use no such reproachful words: we boast of nothing.

C. Well, pardon me that word. But if you do not brag, yet you say that you can pray by the Spirit, and we cannot, at least do not. In which you ascribe something more to yourselves than is to be found among us.

N. C. Yes.

C. Then you mean more by praying by the Spirit than being inspired with devout affections. For those you cannot deny we may have as well as you; and unless you will take upon you to search the heart, you must grant we feel them, since we protest that we do. From whence I conclude, whatsoever you say, that your men would have you believe that it is the Spirit which speaks in them and by them when they pray. Which is a thing that reproaches not only them, but the very Spirit of God; and (as I said before) hath at least confirmed men in their atheistical or unbelieving inclinations.

N. C. Well, I will not dispute this with you any longer. But tell me seriously, do you think that men could pray with that readiness and elocution, and length, if they were not mightily assisted by the Spirit of God?

C. Yes, indeed do I. Their own spirits will serve them for this purpose, if they be but endued with good fancies and a sufficient measure of boldness. For it is a great virtue (I

beyond the presbyterians, than the language attributed to Goodwin after the death of Cromwell by Burnet and others, which, though discredited by later apologists, (Price's Protestant Nonconformity, ii. 627.) rests upon the authority of Tillotson, an ear-witness. "God was as it were reproached with Cromwell's services, and challenged for taking him away so soon. Goodwin, who had pretended to assure them in a prayer that he was not to die, which was but a few minutes before he expired, had now the impudence to say to God, Thou hast deceived us, and we were deceived."—Burnet, i. 141. South, vol. i. p. 65.]

assure you) in this case not to be modest; though we reckon it a singular virtue to be so.

N. C. I cannot think it possible.

C. Why? Neighbour, you may take my word for this. There are many of our men could outdo you in this gift (as you call it) of prayer, if they would give themselves the liberty; and yet you would not think them inspired, I am sure. I mean, they are able to speak so readily and fluently, so earnestly and passionately of all manner of things, and to continue this strain so long, and that without humming or hawing, that if you did not know them, perhaps you would admire them above most of your own.

N. C. Then I should conclude they had the gift of prayer, but suppress it.

C. So they have; but it is both in you and us only a natural gift, or a habit acquired by exercise, and practice, and imitation——

N. C. Now you speak profanely.

C. I speak the sense of the soberest of your own party, (as I verily believe,) who would say the same if they durst but deal plainly with you. And (as simple as I am) I dare undertake to justify the truth of what I say against any of them, if they have the face to contradict it.

N. C. I see you leave the Spirit of God nothing to do in our prayers.

C. Would you would see how you forget yourself. Did I not tell you what the spirit of prayer was? how that God bestows it upon us, when he gives us a sense of himself and of our needs, and stirs up in us holy desires, and passionate longings after his righteousness: which we should express in such words as are becoming that Majesty with whom we have to do. And this is the reason that we take care to choose our words, and not leave them to extemporary invention, especially in the public service of God.

N. C. Do you think they will ever want words whose hearts are full of desires? or can great affections ever fail to furnish us with plenty of language?

C. Yes, that they may. For all experience tells us, that very great and high affections are too big for words, and make a man at a stand for want of expressions; which no man sure

will think a seemly thing in a public congregation. And the passions of admiration and reverence of God restrain a man's forwardness of speaking to him, and make him like a few words best, which he is not then in a fit case to invent. As for lesser affections and superficial heats, I grant they seldom let a man want words, (if he have tolerable parts,) and make him speak more readily than he would do at another time: yet they are not able ever to furnish him with those that are fit, proper and decent. Which methinks should make you not quarrel with a sober form of words, at least in our public devotions.

N. C. Would you could persuade me that a form of words is lawful to be used; it would go a great way to persuade me to come to your church.

C. Strange that you should be so inapprehensive! It is so lawful to use a form of words, that I have shown you it is in a sort necessary: that is, we can have no security that the service of God will always be performed well without one.

N. C. I confess I do not yet apprehend you.

C. Observe then. I say, the best of men, though their hearts be full of good desires, may, from some cause or other, want such words as are fit and proper to express their meaning. In this case they must hack in an unseemly manner, or make a stop, or use such words as are too rude and slovenly, or speak broken and imperfect language, or at the best such as is too hard and obscure, and unintelligible by the vulgar. None of which things are to be permitted in the public worship; which ought to be performed with the greatest solemnity and gravity. And therefore to prevent that undecency, and secure the service of God from all that is unhandsome, you must consent to a prescribed form of words, wherein men shall address their humble and hearty desires to him. For though some men, at some times, may pray well enough, yet other men, and the same men at other times, may be very confused, and full of tautologies; and it is well if they endeavour not to supply these defects with rude clamours, brutish noises, and a deal of the holy Scriptures wofully misapplied. Beside, how can you persuade any strangers to be of our church, or to hold any communion with us, if they do not know how we worship God? And how should they know that, unless you can produce something, which by a general consent is owned for his service? This no doubt is one reason why all churches in the world

have had their public forms of prayer, that they may let every body know how God is served by them; and why the best men in reformed churches have wished those happy days might come of amity and friendship, that they might by a common council[b] and consent form a certain liturgy, which might be as a symbol and bond of concord among them all. And truly I cannot devise[b] how your ministers can justify themselves in separating now from all the reformed churches (as well as ours) with whom they covenanted to maintain an uniformity, not only in doctrine and discipline, but worship also. To me they seem to live in an open breach of one branch of that Covenant, of which they are so tender. For they do not "endeavour in their place and calling to reform according to the example of those churches[c]."

N. C. What should they reform now they have no power?

C. Themselves and their congregations, which they take the boldness to gather, who ought to serve God (according to the Covenant) "after the example of the best reformed churches;" all of which have an order and form of prayer, and never imagined that those written forms did bind up and stint the Spirit. This is a peculiar fancy of your own, who have no form at all in any of your conventicles or meetings, though it is in the power of your ministers to have one, as well as to hold such meetings; and though they be bound by their League and Covenant to do their endeavour to imitate those that have. Nay, I much question whether they use the Lord's prayer. They that do, I believe, have the least company; such is the prejudice which they (contrary to their Covenant) have sown in people's minds against forms of prayer, even that of the Lord's[d].

[b] ['counsel,' 'advise' edd. 1, 2.]

[c] [This is the language of the first clause of the Covenant.]

[d] ["Some have not been ashamed to say, that if Christ were upon earth again, he would not give his church a set form of prayer, because it stinteth the Spirit. An idle and impudent minion said not long since, (a serv. in Br. Str. Test.) that shee did thank God she had forgotten the Lord's prayer. A woman walking up Col. hill, within these few weeks said, 'I am very glad that I have not said the Lord's prayer for above a twelvemonth.' Another farre worse than these, if worse can be (a serv. in T. P. Test,) said, 'I thinke in my conscience I shall offend God more if I should say the Lord's prayer, than if I should lie with a man.' O intolerable impiety! O impudent atheism! O horrid blasphemie! Do not these strip off the white and keep the black?"—Bales' Sermon, p. 28. referred to above, p. 321. Compare Gauden's Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Suspiria, pp. 108, 156.]

Which thing considered, it makes me astonished at your impudence in pretending such niceness of conscience, and fear to break your Covenant, when you break it every time you meet together without some form of divine service.

N. C. They only covenanted to reform this church of England according to the example of the best reformed churches; which they cannot do.

C. Only, do you say? Is that a less thing than to[e] reform a particular congregation? Methinks they should think themselves obliged to do what they can when they cannot do what they would; and to do that in a part, which they cannot do in the whole; that is, bring in some form of prayer into your churches, for so no doubt you esteem them.

N. C. I do not think they can if they would.

C. Why?

N. C. Because most of us think forms unlawful.

C. That is their fault, who either taught you to believe so heretofore, or do not instruct you now to believe otherwise. Though it were a very easy thing for them to do it, and convince you of your error, even from your own practice.

N. C. My practice? I never use any, and I think never shall.

C. It is a wonderful thing that you should be so blind. Do you never sing the Psalms of David, and that as they are translated into English metre?

N. C. Yes.

C. Those are prayers and petitions as well as thanksgivings, are they not? And, let me tell you, the words are so mean, and sometime uncouth, nay, the sense of the prophet so often mistaken in that translation which is commonly used[f]; that if you had so much to except against the Common Prayer as may reasonably be excepted against many things there, there would be no end of your complaints; you would be ten times louder in your clamours than you are.

N. C. Indeed I did not think of this.

C. Your ministers do, but are not so sincere as to give you notice of it, lest you should be disabused, and they should lose

[e] ['to' om. ed. 6.]

[f] [By an ordinance of the house of commons in November 1645, Rouse's metrical version of the Psalms was authorized in lieu of the obsolete one of Sternhold and Hopkins. See Neal's Puritans, iii. 266, and Baillie's letters, ii. 120.]

your custom. But pray think of it yourself hereafter, and tell me why it is not as lawful to use a form of prayer in prose as to use one in verse. You will be a marvellous man if you can show a reason of the difference.

N. C. But this form is not taken out of the mass-book, as the Common Prayer is.

C. Then you lay down your quarrel at a form of prayer, and only scruple this form now in use; and that because it hath been used in the Roman church.

N. C. Very right.

C. Then pray lay aside your Bible too; at least cut the Psalter out of your book, for that is much in use in their service.

N. C. You go too fast; that is the word of God, and therefore to be used; but any thing else used in the church of Rome I think we should have nothing to do with.

C. This is a foolish exception. For the reason you gave me concludes against the use of the Psalms too, or else it concludes nothing; which I thus demonstrate. You lay down this proposition, "Whatsoever is used in the service of the Roman church must not be used by us." To this I add another; "The Psalms and other Scriptures are used in the service of the Roman church." Now do you draw any other conclusion, if you can, from these two but this, "that those Scriptures must not be used by us." If you like not this conclusion, then you must mend the first proposition, (which is your own, and you may do what you will with it;) as for mine, it cannot be mended, for it is certainly true. Now how will you mend it, but by allowing us the use of whatsoever is good in their service? And then you must admit of more than the Scripture to be used by us, even all that is according to the Scripture; as our prayers certainly are, though some of them are but translations of the Latin prayers used in that church.

N. C. I will mend it in this manner: Whatsoever they use, (except it be the word of God,) we are not to use it.

C. It is mere humour that makes you limit it in this manner. For there is something good besides the Scripture, viz. that which is writ, said, or done according to it. And why they should make any thing of this nature unuseful to us by their using it, since you confess the holy Scripture, notwith-

standing their use, nay, abuses of it, is not profaned thereby, is past my capacity to understand. But perhaps you will be more sensible of what I say, if I tell you that upon these principles you must reject the use of the creed commonly called the Apostles' Creed, because it is professed there in Divine service as well as here.

N. C. I would not willingly go so far from them.

C. Not go? you must, whether you will or no, if you will follow your principles, which will carry you so far, and a great deal further. For this is the very bottom on which your discourse stands; that whatsoever hath been in use by a bad company of men, must by no means be used by us in God's worship; except only such portions of holy Scripture as shall be thought fit to be read in our assemblies. From whence it follows, that you may not lift up your eyes to heaven, nor kneel when you pray, nor——

N. C. Now methinks you rave.

C. Pray hear me a little, and you shall see it is you that are wild, and not I: so wild, as to practise that which you condemn. If we must not do what the church of Rome doeth in the worship of God, then much less what heathens have done and still do; for they are worse than the Roman church.

N. C. I think your proposition is good enough; but who doeth that which the heathen idolaters were wont to do?

C. That did the Jewish church, and that do you.

N. C. Prove that.

C. So I will; and you shall have Scripture for it. The Jews and you also bow your knees or bodies to God, and the heathens bowed their knees to Baal, and bodies to Rimmon, 2 Kings v. 18; 1 Kings xix. 18. You all lift up your eyes to heaven when you worship; and the heathen lift up their eyes to their idols, as appears by the practice in Israel, who imitated their customs, Ezek. xviii. 12, and xxxiii. 25. You stretch out your hand to God, and so the custom was to do to a strange god, Psalm xliv. 20. The heathen sat down at their feasts, when they ate of the sacrifices in the temples of their gods, 1 Cor. viii. 10; Exod. xxxii. 6; which is the very posture which you are so fond of when you come to feast with Christ, in the holy sacrament of his body and blood sacrificed for us. I would add more, but that it would be tedious. And the truth

of it is, good men use that every day well which bad men use ill: and therefore I see not but we may do so with many things practised in the Roman church. Do not good men use the name of God with reverence, which wicked men continually blaspheme? Do we not refresh ourselves with meat and drink, of which many debauched persons take a surfeit? Those fine clothes which some wear for pride, do not others wear because they befit their quality? And, to come nearer our business, those prayers which some men mumble over, others read devoutly; and those garments which some may use as holy, others use as decent. What should ail us then, I ask you once again, that we cannot rightly use those things which the church of Rome abuses? say those good prayers, for instance, in English, which they say in Latin? wear a white garment, without any ceremony to consecrate it, which they hallow with many prayers, and crossings, and holy water? Nay, use the sign of the cross itself upon one occasion, only once, after the sacrament of baptism, and merely as a token the child is already become a servant of the crucified Jesus; which they use upon all occasions, before and in baptism, a great many times, and that also to drive away the devil, and to make the sacrament more efficacious. There are an hundred things more present themselves to my thoughts about these matters, but I am ashamed to discourse any longer against so absurd a principle as yours. For in my judgment you may as well do some things which the church of Rome doeth, as believe some things which she believes; as I hope you do. Nay, you believe even what the devil believes. And as it would be a very dangerous rule, if any one should say, Believe quite contrary to what the devil believes; so it is no less (but rather more) dangerous to say, Do quite contrary to what the church of Rome doeth.

N. C. I have not much to say against your discourse, but we have a persuasion among us that nothing is lawful to be done by you or anybody else in the worship of God but what is enjoined by himself in his word. And then what becomes of your crossing, and chaunting, and kneeling, with all the rest of your inventions? are they not all idolatrous?

C. This is the wildest fancy that we have yet heard, as many of our ministers have shown by unanswerable arguments. For it makes that unlawful which the Scripture allows; in

which we find many holy men doing those things (without any censure) in God's worship which he had no where commanded. Nay, it makes the worship of God impossible; the time, the place, the vesture in which it shall be performed being nowhere appointed. It condemns also the best Christians in all ages till of late, who without any scruple used forms of prayer, and such rites as those about which there is all this stir. And, which perhaps will most move you, I have heard our ministers show that this principle doth condemn yourselves, who (when you take an oath) do not refuse to lay your hand upon the book, and kiss the gospel, according as the custom is. Now all agree that an oath is a solemn act of Divine worship, it being an acknowledgment of all God's attributes, and he being invocated and called upon to be a witness and a judge in the case. And if that be an act of worship, I am sure kissing the book and laying on the hand are as much ceremonies as signing with the cross: outward signs (I mean) accompanying the action of swearing, though they belong not to the essence of it. And I am as sure that you can nowhere show me that God hath commanded this religious action to be attended with this ceremony. Behold, then, into what perplexities these men cast you! what snares they entangle you and themselves in! Out of which they cannot set you free, but by acknowledging (as we do) that men may appoint this ceremony in taking an oath, though God hath not appointed it; according as in this very case Abraham made his servant put his hand under his thigh when he sware, though it were a thing nowhere commanded. But then consider again, that they and we may take the like liberty in other parts of Divine worship, and submit to such usages as are appointed by our governors, provided they be nowhere forbidden. Or if, rather than condemn themselves, they will condemn good old Abraham, and say he followed the custom of the world too much: there is no way for you but to turn Quakers, and to condemn clean clothes when we come to worship God; to find fault with the minister for standing in a pulpit, for preaching by a glass, for wearing a gown, yea, a cloak or a cap, especially with ears: for none of these things are by any Divine command.

N. C. I see you have something to say to every thing. If I did not know you, I should suspect you for a Jesuit.

C. That would be ridiculous. For if there be any of them in laymen's clothes, they do not persuade you to our church, but from it; knowing that is the surest way to gain you, if they can once unsettle your minds, and fill you with fancies: of which they will at last persuade you there is no end, till you rest yourself in the bosom of that harlot which you so much abhor.

N. C. I see one cannot weary you. But suppose these things be lawful in themselves, I am told they become unlawful when once they are enjoined.

C. This is an extravagance wilder than all that went before. They are so far from being unlawful by being commanded, that they become necessary; to be done, I mean.

N. C. I thought you would say so. But that is the very thing makes me think them unlawful when commanded; for it takes away Christian liberty by making them necessary to be done.

C. Goodly! what fine things do your Christians make themselves, that must be restrained in nothing, though for public order's sake! nay, must overrule the laws of Christian princes, and show the power they have over their commands! Do you think there ever were any Christians in the world before you that held themselves bound not to do a lawful thing merely because his sovereign would have it done? If he did command a thing unlawful, there were good reason not to do it; but if he is like to be equally disobeyed whether he command things lawful or unlawful, and it be a duty to disobey him in both alike; he is in miserable circumstances, and had better never meddle with the worship of God, but leave it to be ordered as everybody fancies.

N. C. That is the best way.

C. Nay, now I think on it, there is a way to make you do what he likes best, and you shall hold yourselves bound to it.

N. C. That is strange.

C. Not so strange as true. For when a prince hath a mind you should do a thing, if I were of his council, I would advise him to make a law that you should not do it. For then you would either show that you are people of a humoursome conscience, that is guided by no certain principles; or else, according to your own rules, you would do what he forbids you.

For as, when he commands a thing about the service of God, it becomes unlawful to be done; so when he forbids any thing, it becomes unlawful to let it alone; your liberty being invaded by him either way. If he would but require therefore that nobody should wear the surplice, or use the sign of the cross, we should see all your ministers with surplices on their backs, and all your children crossed in the forehead: for else you would be restrained in your liberty.

N. C. I never knew any man fetch things about in this fashion as you do. The truth is, you entangle me, but you do not persuade me.

C. I have not much hope of it, if you feel not the force of these arguments: yet I will try what a familiar resemblance will do. We are agreed that the thing commanded by authority is not less indifferent in its own nature after it is commanded than it was before, but only our use of it is not so indifferent and at liberty. We must needs be therefore agreed also that this restraint comes not upon us from the things themselves, because still perfectly indifferent, but only from the law, which ties us up. Now we say, that to this law we are to be subject, not regarding our own liberty so much as the prince's authority. You say, No; but as the law cannot alter the nature of the things, so it ought not to restrain your freedom in the use of them, but leave that as indifferent as the things themselves. That is, that the king ought to make no such law about those matters: if he do, then it is unlawful to do what he commands to be always done, because he ought to leave you at liberty to let it alone if you please, and you ought to maintain your liberty, and by no means to part with it. Put the case then that you (being master of a family) will have your children and servants to come at a certain time and place, &c. to worship God. It is indifferent indeed in itself, and all one to God, whether it be at ten, eleven, or twelve o'clock, or in what part of your house they meet, or in what clothes they come, or what postures they use: but you appoint the hour of meeting shall be twelve, and that they come into your parlour or hall, or chapel, if you have that conveniency: and beside, you require your servants that they shall not come into your parlour (suppose) in those frocks wherein they just before rubbed your horse's heels, (which you think not handsome or decent,) but

in their liveries, or some such neater apparel. And when they come there, you bid them stand some part of the time; and the rest you bid them sit, if they please, and at prayers kneel, as you do yourself. Let me ask you now, Do you really think that this is any such restraint of their liberty as they have just cause to complain of it? Would you think you took too much upon you in making these orders for your family, of which you are governor? Or would you judge that servant to be without fault, and guiltless of any contempt, who should say, that he will come at ten of the clock, but not at twelve; because it matters not which, so the thing be done; and he will not be tied to any order, but to do the thing? And suppose another should come and say, that he will pray, if you please to come into the stable, but he will not come into the parlour; for it is indifferent where it is; and he must not be confined to one place more than another. And a third should come and tell you that he is ready to join in prayer, but then it must be in his frock, otherwise he will not; for God may be served as well in that as any other garment, and he must use his Christian liberty, and not be bound to your fashions. And the next should tell you, that he will sit in your presence, or else you shall not have his company: his reason is, because it is all one to God whether he sit or stand; and he is not to let you be master of his freedom in those matters. What would you say to these people? Nay, what would you do with them? Would you excuse them, and acknowledge your own guilt in making such injunctions? Or would you not rather treat them as a company of saucy clowns and ill-bred fellows, not fit to be kept in any orderly family? If you should not, all the world would hold you as ridiculous as they. For every master of a family is vested with sufficient authority to see such commands as those observed. And when they that will not observe them, yet acknowledge them to be indifferent things; truly I think nobody will think them harshly used if they be turned out of doors. If they be fools and blocks, that cannot understand common sense, then (I confess) they are to be pitied; and his good nature may work so far as to bear with their simplicity, if they be otherwise good servants: but yet those knaves that abused their simplicity, and instilled these filthy principles into them, deserve to be punished, and put out of his service, till

they acknowledge their fault, and learn more manners. Just like this is the present case before us. The church is but a larger family, a wider society, in which the king is the father and supreme governor. If he make some laws for the more convenient, orderly, and decent worship of God there, which in themselves are lawful, and declared not to be in their own nature necessary, but only prudent constitutions; I cannot see but that those who refuse to obey them upon pretence of their liberty, and that God may as well be worshipped without those things, do show themselves as unmannerly, rude, and refractory persons, as the children or servants in that supposed family, of which I bade you conceive yourself master. And I leave you to apply this case to that, and to make the parallel complete in your thoughts at your leisure. I hope it will be worth your labour if you do it seriously.

N. C. It gives me some light into the business already. But still I wonder that all our ministers should hold your forms and orders unlawful. Sure they have some better reason for it than I have.

C. Alas, good man! you are merely abused: for though they are willing you should remain in the opinion of their unlawfulness, they do not think so themselves.

N. C. What would you make of them? Do not I hear them constantly speak against them?

C. Nay, do you make what consequences you think fit from it. As for the thing itself, I will maintain, that those ministers you hear (some, indeed, think otherwise) are not of the mind that it is unlawful to come to common prayer, or wear a surplice, or kneel at the sacrament.

N. C. You cannot make good your confident assertion.

C. Why, man! I have seen them at the prayers; and many of them have professed they did not think the ceremonies such great bugbears that one need to be afraid of them. And if this will not do, I have a more convincing argument of their opinion in these matters.

N. C. And do these very men now seem to dislike the public prayers?

C. Seem! you confess they speak against forms. And we see the open affronts they put upon our service, by meeting at

the very time when it is performed: the reason of which I expounded to you before.

N. C. Therefore I always thought they accounted it unlawful.

C. No such matter. You should rather think something else; and (to help you a little) consider whether their integrity be so great as you imagine.

N. C. Your meaning, sir?

C. I mean, they do not seem to me to deal sincerely with you, in suffering you to live in this dangerous persuasion of the sinfulness of Common Prayer and the ceremonies, when they know in their consciences they are not sinful. And then to hear you call it bibble-babble, porridge[e], or such like vile names, without any reproof, is still worse. But if you hear themselves speak against the Common Prayer and the ceremonies, there is the greater reason to have a vehement suspicion of their dishonesty, because they decry that which in their consciences they allow.

N. C. I am not fully satisfied of that.

C. Why did many of them deliberate so long whether they should accept of dignities in the church[f], if they did not believe it lawful to hear the prayers, and to put even the Babylonish garment (as you will needs call the surplice) upon their backs; and, more than that, to wear the very rags of the whore, the lawn sleeves? If it was so plain a business, that their conscience and their Covenant would not let them conform, one would think they should have professed it openly without any more ado. And therefore, I conclude, that pause and delibe-

[e] [An anonymous pamphlet was published in 1640, with the title, "The Service Book no better than a mess of Pottage," Neal, ii. 344.]

[f] ["Several of the ministers were offered preferments: Mr. Calamy had the bishoprick of Coventry and Litchfield offered him; Dr. Reignolds the bishoprick of Norwich, and Mr. Baxter that of Hereford. Dr. Manton was offered the deanery of Rochester, Dr. Bates the deanery of Coventry and Litchfield, and Mr. Edward Bowles the deanery of York: but all refused, on the account of the uncertainty of the continuance of the terms in the declaration, except Dr. Reignolds, who declared, when he accepted the bishoprick of Norwich, that he did it upon the terms laid down in the declaration; and that he would no longer hold or exercise it, than he could do it on those terms."—Calamy's Abridgement of Baxter's Life, chap. 8. p. 151.]

ration was about something else; not about matters of conscience, but of interest and policy[g]. As, whether the people would take it well, and not laugh at them, as so many magpies got upon a perch: whether it would not be a scandalous thing, that is, not for their credit and reputation: whether they could not hold such a party with them in non-conformity as would balance the episcopal, and so force them at least to a toleration. In short, whether they should not lose the affections of their own party, which they had already made, and win very little upon the affections of others, whom they had so much disobliged in the late troubles. These were their secret debates in their cabals, the weighty points that were to be stated in those consultations. You, good man, think perhaps that they spent their time in fasting and seeking God to direct their consciences. No, no; it was not their conscience, but their credit, which then lay at stake ——

N. C. Why should you think so?

C. Because I have heard some of them acknowledge they did not scruple what we do, but thought it unhandsome for them to do it. Sometimes they put it in a more religious phrase, and said it would give a greater scandal to the world, who would think the worse of the profession of Christianity; but the meaning was, in plain English, that they were ashamed to confess their error, and to set those things again which they had rashly pulled down.

N. C. And would you not have men to consult their credit?

C. Yes, but not so much as the peace of the church of God. We ought to deny ourselves, and be content to be put to shame for God's sake, (which is indeed true glory;) and there is little of God among them that seek not peace, though on

[g] ["In the judgment of charity," says the author of the "Humble Apology," &c. in reply to the present work, "we may judge the true reason was, they expected then some alteration and reformation both in worship and government; and they waited to see whether there would be such a reformation as their consciences could rest satisfied withal: if so, they resolved to accept those dignities; but when they perceived things were to be settled in *statu quo*, in the condition they are now, they waved those places and preferments. Might but bishop Usher's Reduction have been admitted in the government, and the ceremonies removed, or but his majesties declaration about ecclesiastical affairs been made a law, they would have thankfully imbraced the offers that were then made them."—p. 511.]

those terms. Besides, there can no account be given of their behaviour since, in cherishing this fancy among you, (or suffering it to grow,) that conformity is unlawful, unless it be this; that they think it will make more for their reputation among you, if you believe it was conscience, not care of their own credit and estimation, that kept them from conforming.

N. C. You are the severest man that ever I knew, and love to search too far into the reason of things.

C. Would you would do so too, for then you would soon be of my mind.

N. C. No, not as long as one scruple remains in my mind.

C. What is that?

N. C. I have heard some of them call your's *will-worship*, which the apostle condemns[h], (Col. ii. ult.)

C. Very likely they might, and not understand what they said.

N. C. Do you believe they would, like brute beasts, speak evil of things they know not?

C. I will not censure them for that; but this I can tell you, that one of your ministers confessed to a sober person of my acquaintance, that he had never so much as read over the Common Prayer book in all his life, and yet he was no youngster. Perhaps there[i] may be more such: and then if they speak against it, judge of them as you see cause.

N. C. I believe such men dislike it without looking into it; because, as I told you, it is *will-worship*, a mere invention of man.

C. That is a word of St. Paul, whom, no doubt, they have read; but I question whether they understood him.

N. C. Why should you doubt it?

C. Because, if we take the sense of the word, not from fancy, but from the matter wherewith it is connected, it makes nothing for your purpose, but rather much against you.

N. C. Can you tell better than they?

C. I do not say so; but I have heard one of our ministers give such an explication of the place as satisfied me that you use a weapon which wounds yourselves.

N. C. Let us hear it.

[h] [See some remarks on the subject of this scruple in a sermon by South, vol. ii. p. 204.]

[i] ['they' ed. 6.]

C. If you look a little back, you will find the apostle forbids *worshipping of angels,* (ver. 18,) as a bold invention of men, for which there was no revelation. And then he speaks against such superstitious people (whether Jews or others, the minister could not tell us) as made it unlawful to marry, to eat some kind of meats, to touch or come near some things; none of which God hath made sinful, but they were the mere commandments of men. (ver. 21, 22.) Now those that were of this humour, he immediately after (ver. 23) charges with *will-worship.* Which must consist therefore, one would think, in these two things.

First, in giving the worship due to God to some creature or other: secondly, in enjoining that as a thing necessary, and commanded by God as a piece of his worship and service which he hath left indifferent: or, in other words, when any thing is so enjoined to be done or not done, as if it were the will and command of God he should be so served, when it is a mere constitution of the will of man, then a *will-worship* is erected. Now, I am sure, you will not make us guilty of the first sort of *will-worship,* because none are more against it than we. As for the second; our church hath declared to all the world that none of the things you boggle at are imposed under the notion of necessary, or religious in themselves, or as commanded by God; but are of an indifferent nature, and only used as decent and comely in the judgment of the present governors, who can alter these things, and constitute something else in the room, if they see it fit; which they could not pretend to did they think them necessary. But then, as our church is not guilty of *will-worship* in the apostle's sense, so, on the other side, I know not how to excuse those from that very guilt who oppose what is ordained among us as unlawful, and forbid us to use those rites and orders, because sinful things. For they make that necessary to be forborne and left undone, which God hath not made so, but left indifferent; and so they, in effect, condemn those as sinners whom God acquits from all blame. As those in the apostle's discourse said, *Touch not, taste not, handle not;* so you say, "Kneel not, pray not by a form, wear not a surplice," &c. Now, since you think (as those men did) to please God by not doing those things which he hath nowhere forbidden, I do not see but you commit the

very fault which the apostle reproves: that is, you make that necessary not to be done (if we will be true worshippers of God) which he hath not made necessary not to be done, but left us at liberty to do it if we please. By which means you make a religion of your own, and study to honour God by abstaining from these things, by which he never said that he was dishonoured. O that all tender consciences would seriously consider this! for they would soon discern that your ministers, by forbidding those things now in dispute, lay greater burdens upon the consciences of their brethren, and clog them with more duties than God hath laid upon them. Whereas we, who think those things may be done, lay no other burden upon the conscience than what God himself hath laid; which is, to obey our governors in all things, wherein he himself hath not bidden us to do the contrary.

N. C. You will endeavour by and by to make me believe the moon is made of green cheese. All this discourse tends to prove that we are superstitious, which you know in your consciences we abhor; and are therefore so averse to your ways, because we judge them superstitious.

C. You begin to be sagacious, and to smell things afar off. The very truth is, I think it is no easy matter to find more superstitious people in the world than yourselves. And your clamours against superstition prove nothing, but that a man may be guilty of some faults, and not know it.

N. C. Fie, for shame!

C. You must not think to put me off with words and wry faces. I will prove you superstitious, or else be converted to you.

N. C. You will not make good your word.

C. Yes, but I will. Tell me, what is superstition?

N. C. I am not well skilled in definitions.

C. No, if you were, you would have smelt the foul beast among you before this time. But your business is only to get some ugly words by the end, and then to throw them at everybody whom you do not fancy, though they have less to do with them than yourselves. We have been taught that superstition is a great dread lest God should not be pleased, unless we do some things which we need not do; and lest he should be displeased, when we do some things in which there is no

harm. Which dread springs (as you very well saw) out of an opinion that such things are good or evil, (and so must be done, or must not be done, else God will take it ill,) which in truth are merely indifferent. Or, in shorter and perhaps plainer terms, it is a needless fear in matters of religion, which makes a man either not dare to do those things which he hath a liberty to do, or think he must, upon pain of damnation, do those things which he may as well let alone.

N. C. What then?

C. What then, do you say? I would have you behold your face in this glass, and see how wretchedly and superstitiously you look. For you think you must not, for fear of God's displeasure, use a form, nor sign a child with the cross in baptism, nor bow in the house of God, nor go up to the rails, nay, nor kneel, nor hear church-music, nor uncover your heads when you enter into a church, nor call the Lord's day Sunday [i], nor keep an holy-day. Nay, it was a long time before you thought it lawful to let your hair grow below your ears: all which things we may do, and not displease God at all. On the other side, you imagine you are bound to propagate and spread all your little opinions, though with the ruin of kingdoms: that you are tied to maintain your liberty in indifferent matters, against all the authority of a king, and to the disturbing a church: that you must have a sermon or two on a fasting day, or else you fear it is not well kept; and two sermons on the Lord's day, or else you doubt it is not sanctified. Nay, some of you (I remember) fancied heretofore that it was no sermon, if it were not in the pulpit. And to such an height is your superstition grown, that you scarce think a prayer is acceptable to God, unless it be long [k]. And you are afraid he

[i] [The use of terms to designate the days of the week supposed to savour of heathen antiquity constituted one of the standing objections of the puritan party. It was brought forward prominently both at the Hampton Court and Savoy conferences.]

[k] [The length to which the discourses and extempore devotions of the puritan divines habitually extended might well be thought incredible. Instances are recorded of services thus continuing uninterruptedly upwards of seven hours.

One instance of a public fast, as formally observed by the Assembly, may serve for an example.—

"We spent from nine to five very graciously.—After Dr. Twisse had begun with a briefe prayer, Mr. Marshall prayed large two houres

is not served aright, unless we have a long prayer before sermon; after we have been praying a great while for all manner of things. And such a necessity you seem to lay upon extemporary prayer, that many well disposed people, who have not that gift, dare not pray at all, (at least in their families,) for fear they should not pray aright. And all these are things of such a nature, as that they may not be done, or done otherwise than you think they must, and God be never the less pleased with us.

N. C. Now you have discovered the naughtiness of your heart, in speaking against sermons in the afternoon.

C. If I should do so, I should speak against myself, and run

most divinelie, confessing the sins of the members of the Assemblie, in a wonderfullie pathetick and prudent way. After, Mr. Arrowsmith preached one houre, then a psalme; thereafter Mr. Vines prayed near two houres, and Mr. Palmer preached one houre, and Mr. Seaman prayed near two houres, then a psalme. After, Mr. Henderson brought them to a short sweet conference of the heart confessed in the Assemblie, and other seen faults, to be remedied, and the conveniencie to preach against all sects, especiallie Anabaptists and Antinomians. Dr. Twisse closed all with a short prayer and blessing."—Baillie's letters, vol. ii. p. 184. See also the account given above, p. 314, of the inauguration of the Covenant by the Assembly and house of Commons.

No name, it might be considered, stands more deservedly high among the non-conforming clergy of the time for serious and sober piety, than that of John Howe. Yet the following statement of what was the usual limit of his religious exercises in public, may well be read in our day with some feeling of amazement. "I shan't easily forget the account he once gave me in private conversation of the great pains he took among them, without any help or assistance, on the public fasts, which in those days returned pretty frequently, and were generally kept with very great solemnity. He told me it was upon those occasions his common way, to begin about nine in the morning, with a prayer for about a quarter of an hour, in which he begged a blessing on the work of the day; and afterwards read and expounded a chapter or psalm, in which he spent about three quarters, then prayed for about an hour, preached for another hour, and prayed for about half an hour. After this he retired, and took some little refreshment, for about a quarter of an hour, or more, (the people singing all the while,) and then came again into the pulpit, and prayed for another hour, and gave them another sermon of about an hour's length; and so concluded the service of the day, at about four of the clock in the evening, with about half an hour or more in prayer."—Calamy's Life of Howe, p. 14.

Calamy speaks of the inexpressible weariness of such services; and not a little of the licentiousness of the succeeding reign must be attributed to the inevitable reaction from the restraint of a discipline as unnatural as exacting.]

into your fault: I think they may be used, or they may be let alone, according as the edification of the people shall require. But to make them so necessary as you do, arises from a superstitious fancy that God is not well served without them. Whereas in truth the Catechism expounded, or the Scriptures opened, would be as well, or rather better.

N. C. I doubt there is something that is naught lies at the bottom of such discourses.

C. You should rather suspect there are naughty things at the bottom of such opinions as yours. For the fruit of your superstition is this at the best, rash and unjust censuring of your brethren, that you do not the things which you make so necessary to be done, or do the things which you make so necessary to be forborne; and at last downright schism and separation from them, because you fancy they are out of the way of God.

N. C. I must confess I have some fear you are so; who can be content without a sermon in the afternoon, and satisfied with common prayer, which I could never feel myself so affected with as I am with extemporary devotions.

C. That is because you had so low an esteem of it; and therefore brought no desires, nor used any endeavours to be moved by it: but rather you set yourself in a dull and sleepy posture, as one that had no list to hear it. I could tell you something else besides this, but it would only vex you.

N. C. I am not afraid of any thing you can say. Pray speak your mind.

C. I believe, if you would examine yourself, you would find there is some part of your ministers' extemporary prayers which do no more affect you than our service.

N. C. What part should that be?

C. The entrance or beginning of his prayer: when he speaks very slow, as if he was studying what to say, and draws out his words with a low voice, and with a small degree of vehemence, and little or no motion; then, I say, I believe your affections are low too, and you feel not your heart much moved. But when his voice begins to rise, (especially if he lift it up on a sudden, and it break out like a clap of thunder,) and when he speaks more fluently, and his zeal begins to kindle, and he lays about him, and is full of life, (as you call

it,) that is, uses a great deal of action; then is the time, if the truth were known, that your affections stir, and begin to rise from the bottom of your heart, where they lay heavy and dull before. Then you sigh and groan, and perhaps weep, and are put into many passions, which lay quiet enough till his breath blew louder. Is not this the plain truth?

N. C. What then?

C. Then you are no more affected with the prayers of your minister, (as they are pious petitions or acknowledgments of God,) than you are with our Common Prayer; but only with the voice, the vehemency, the action, the pretty fancies and fine phrases, which perhaps he lights upon when he is a little heated; which were it my case, it would make me suspect the love of God was not in me. For why should he think he loves God, who is not moved with affection to him when he hears his greatness, goodness, wisdom and benefits to us soberly and gravely expressed; but is in a great commotion when he meets with a new word that pleases him, or a kind phrase, or melting tone, a sweet voice, or some such thing?

N. C. I hope it is something else that affects me.

C. If it be, then pray tell me, why should not the Common Prayer affect you, whose sense is good enough, only it is not varied and dressed up in new words every day? I beseech you, try your heart, by examining the book, and considering whether those very things be not requested of God there which you desire in your prayers; and if they be, then demand of yourself a reason why they move you no more. I doubt you will find it is because they are not new, but old expressions.

N. C. I will consider of it at leisure.

C. To help you a little, take this along with you, which will go near to convince you, that if it be not the voice and tone, it is the novelty which affects you. Suppose one of the prayers of your own ministers, which you think is indited by the Spirit, were taken in short-hand writing, and afterward used every day in the service of God, as often as our prayers are: tell me seriously, do you not think it would seem very flat at last, fuller of nauseous repetitions and faulty expressions than you conceive to be in the Common Prayer?

N. C. You put a hard question to me.

C. I see you are inclined to be of my mind, and therefore pray consider these two things. First, that since even a prayer which you think so heavenly would not affect you alway, if it were alway used, it is to be feared you are moved only while prayers are new, and indeed because they are new, not because they are good and pious petitions. And secondly, that since it is convenient, if not necessary, to have a form of prayer in the Church, and the Common Prayer hath no other imperfection but what those whom you so much admire would have, were they constantly used as it is; why should you not like it as well as any, especially since it is established by public authority?

N. C. I will consider of it, as I said before. But I wish you had seen a book (as I perceive you have many of ours) newly come out, which "supposes your service-book hath been abused to superstition and idolatry," and therefore must be abolished.

C. He doeth well to suppose it, and not to undertake the proof of it. What is the name of the book?

N. C. Nehushtan[1].

[1] ["Nehushtan; or, a sober and peaceable discourse, concerning the abolishing of things abused to superstition and idolatry: which may serve as one intire and sufficient argument to evince that the Liturgy, ceremonies, and other things used at this day in the church of England, ought neither to be imposed, nor retained, but utterly extirpated and laid aside; and to vindicate the non-conformists in their refusal to close with them. Printed in the year 1668."

This work, which consists throughout of the most captious and extravagant attacks upon the liturgy and ceremonies of the church of England, is unaccompanied either by author's or printer's name, probably for prudential reasons, the laws against publications of its class being at the time most rigorously enforced. It was the production of John Willson, or Wilson, the ejected minister of Backford in Cheshire. "He was of Brazen-Nose College in Oxon. His living of Backford was made pretty considerable for profit by an augmentation which was in those times allowed to divers persons, who, upon testimonials and tryal, were judged men of parts and piety. He submitted to the test, and was approv'd. Sometime after his ejectment, he took an house in Chester, and settled there with his family; and had as large meetings there as the severity of the times and prudence would permit. When liberty was granted, he preach'd in a gentlewoman's house, and had a throng'd congregation that fill'd the hall and galleries, and some part of the court. He was a judicious, profitable preacher. The matter of his discourses was solid and searching; the dress neither negligent

C. I have had a short sight of it, as it creeps up and down privately.

N. C. What do you think of it?

C. I will tell you first what I think of you.

N. C. Why? what is the matter?

C. You seem to be in a most dangerous condition; for you are infected, as I told you, already with the extravagant fancies of a number of other sects, with whom you are blended. And in all likelihood you will have such new inventions, or rather phrensies, every year, as will at last destroy yourselves as well as us. Some of your ministers, for instance, acknowledge that the Liturgy is lawful to be used, and can read it themselves[m]. Others there are that think it lawful, but not convenient for men of their parts and gifts, whose ministry (which it seems is of great necessity and benefit) they conceive would be thereby rendered less useful. Then there is a third sort, who are gone further, and doubt of its lawfulness; so that they dare not be present at it, though they are content others should, who think it lawful. And now here is a man thinks nobody ought to hear it, nor be suffered to use such a form of worship; but though the magistrate ought to tolerate you, yet he ought not to tolerate us. For he saith, It is his duty utterly to extirpate the Liturgy, as well as the ceremonies.

nor affected, neither slovenly nor gaudy, but grave and decent, such as did very well become the matter. He was a zealous contender for the purity of God's worship, as his printed works, and his last will, do sufficiently testify. The being confin'd to a warm room all day, and forc'd frequently for his security to go out at unseasonable times of the night in cold weather, brought a tenderness upon him, which issu'd in so settled a cold and cough, as took him away in the midst of his days. He dy'd at Chester about 1672. He was a man of great worth, and a good scholar; which cannot but be own'd by such as will be at the pains to peruse his writings, though they may not relish the strictness of his principles. The author of the Friendly Debate confuted his Nehushtan, by causing its author to be pursuivanted up to the council, rather than by anything of moment he hath printed against it." —Calamy's Account of Silenced Ministers, p. 127: Palmer's Nonconformist's Memorial, i. 257.]

[m] [The growing moderation of tone manifested by the dissenters in speaking of the Liturgy, is similarly remarked upon by Dr. Grove, bishop of Chichester, in his Persuasive to Communion with the Church of England, published in the Collection of Cases by divines of the city of London, p. 7. ed. 2. fol. Lond. 1694.]

And every one of you "in your places ought to do your parts towards the abolishing of it; and not sit still in the midst of such defilements and snares, but discover your hatred of them, decline their use, and, in such ways as prudence, justice, and order do allow, endeavour the rooting of them out[n]." Whither you will go next, God only knows. And God help the poor children of the church of England, who, when all so boldly challenge liberty and toleration, must be the only persons excluded from this favour, and, according to this gentleman, be denied the use of the Common Prayer, when everybody else may pray what he list!

N. C. You must be content if he have "evinced (as he tells us he hath in his title-page), that the Liturgy, ceremonies, and other things used at this day in the church of England, ought neither to be imposed nor retained, but utterly extirpated and laid aside." And he pretends in his epistle to have said more in this argument than ever was said before.

C. He doth so, and imagines he can wield an old rotten engine, that hath been long laid aside, better than former workmen, who were but bunglers in compare with this artist: for he doubts not to manage it so as to throw down the whole fabric of the English church.

N. C. What engine do you mean?

C. It is this principle, "that it is the will and pleasure of God, that such things as have been abused and polluted in[o] superstitious and idolatrous services should be abolished and laid aside." (p. 15.) Which I observe he contracts into these words, (p. 21,) "It is God's will that things abused in corrupt and false worship should be laid aside."

N. C. And what have you to say to it?

C. I will first tell you what he says to it. After he had told us a great many things (which everybody knows) concerning the will of God that the Israelites should abolish the images and groves and altars of the Canaanites, &c. and thence concluded that such things as have been employed to corrupt ends and purposes must be abolished; at last he comes and tells us, that this principle must not be extended too far, nor made to

[n] [P. 172.]

[o] ['on' ed. 6.]

serve against all things that have been so abused, and he excepts a great number. Nothing commanded by God must be disused upon this account, none of God's creatures are to be refused; nay, no necessary and profitable devices of men need be sent packing, though they have been so profaned; and more than this, he says, that things which are but in a competent degree useful may be retained, if they have been abused to idolatry only in a slight manner, that is, a little while. Nay, things that have been more grossly abused, in case there be no danger for the future of their being employed to idolatry, he is content should be spared, and used either to civil or religious purposes. Now let any man, that can be master of coherent thoughts but for one minute, tell me if this be not as much as to say his principle is not true, and that things are not to be rejected merely upon this account, that they have been employed in false worship, but there must be some other reason for it. For if there be so many things as he confesses that may be abused, and yet may, nay, some ought to be used in God's service, then the abuse is not a sufficient reason for our throwing them away utterly, but there must be some other which makes it necessary. And if he had told us that reason plainly, and spent his discourse in making it good, he had done like a man. But he saw (it is like) that this would not have done his business, for it would not, for instance, have reached to the taking away of Common Prayer; because it may be still useful, as much (sure) as his pen, which, he tells us, must not be thrown away, if any man be so foolish as to bow down to it and worship it[o]: and as necessary, I should think, as the water-pots in Cana of Galilee, which he confesses our Saviour used, though "abused to superstition and unlawful purifications[p]." And it is in no danger to be employed to idolatry, for the papists hate it; and I hope he hath no thoughts that we ever intend to say these prayers to saints or angels, any more than to "bow to a saint or angel standing for a sign at an innkeeper's door:" and yet that is no such profanation of the sign in his judgments but that the owner may let it stand, unless it become customary to bow to it.

[o] [Sect. 11. p. 130.]

[p] [P. 128.]

N. C. Well: is not the gentleman to be commended for his honesty, in not concealing this from his readers, that his proposition or doctrine is not to be understood universally?

C. He durst do no otherwise: for if by "things abused which must be abolished," he had understood all things abused, then he saw the Lord's day would be antiquated; the sacrament of the Lord's supper laid aside; nay, he himself put out of his ministry: the Christian priests or ministers having so much served idols, as he supposes. But since his doctrine was to be limited, why was he not so honest as to do it at first, that so no reader might be abused, who perhaps would not go so far as to come to his limitations? Why did he not say, some things abused must be laid aside, and in some cases; for that is the sense of his proposition? To make it plainer what I mean, I say, (mark it I pray you,) by "things abused," he understands only some things; and when he says they "must be laid aside," he means in some cases they must be laid aside, as appears by his exceptions afterwards: and therefore he had done sincerely if he had drawn up his proposition thus, (and it had been agreeable to his text, 2 Kings xviii. 4,) Some things abused, &c. are in some cases to be laid aside. But, I conceive, he saw that this would not so well serve his purpose, which was, to put people out of conceit with the Common Prayer and ceremonies as much as ever he could. For the doctrine would not have been so popular nor so easy to declaim upon. It would have put him to a great deal of pains to specify the things that must of necessity be destroyed; and then he must have undertaken an harder task, to name the cases wherein those things that might otherwise be spared must needs be abolished; and another harder than that, to show that because some particular things were abolished at one time, none of the like kind must ever be used. And then he must have proceeded to show, (which ought to have made the principal part of his book, but now in a manner is taken for granted,) that the liturgy is in the number of those things that have been so abused, and that the case is so that it cannot be tolerated, but must be destroyed by the king, as the brazen serpent was by Hezekiah. Which would have proved the most difficult labour of all. For supposing it had been ever employed to idolatry, which can never be proved; yet since Hezekiah, in all likelihood, would never

have destroyed such a monument of God's mercies as the brazen serpent, had the people of a long time ceased to burn incense to it, and been in no danger to do so again, why should we throw away the liturgy, now that it is not abused to any idolatrous purpose, nor in any likelihood so to be? Besides, it cannot be so abolished as the brazen serpent was, but the very same form may be brought forth again upon occasion. And therefore, any likelihood that may be fancied of its being used to idolatry in future times, can be of no consideration here, because it may be so used whether we lay it aside or no.

All these things considered, he very wisely waved this method, and only tells the people in general terms, that things abused in false worship must be laid aside; under which he knew the liturgy and ceremonies would be concluded by them, without any more ado. For though his instances or proofs be all particular, and therefore he saw well enough his proposition ought to have been so; yet the people he knew might not see it, but presently conclude the Liturgy must be packed away among the things abused. And though he makes limitations and restrictions of this proposition, to show it is not universal, yet they come a great way behind. And, before there is any certainty what the abused things are which must be laid aside, the magistrate is told his duty, and earnestly pressed to remove them: the people also are instructed in theirs, who, he saith, are all concerned in one respect or other, as you may see, sect. 7[q]. Then he spends another section to show the manner how it must be done, and another about the time; declaring, they must forthwith lay their hand to the work, even before they knew what they had to do, (for the time was not come to tell them that.) And then another follows to give the reasons of the point; wherein these things are represented as so odious and loathsome to God, that you may well think the Liturgy might be condemned to the flames by the reader, before he came to consider whether it was not an excepted thing; and he might be in such a flame to see execution done forthwith, as not to have patience to deliberate whether he ought to save it or no. Nor is the matter much mended when he comes to his cautions: for, lest it should happen to be

[q] [P. 83. sqq.]

acquitted or reprieved, he doth not so much as bring it to a trial, much less bid his readers take heed of passing rash judgment, without examining whether it were guilty of the aforesaid crime or no, but fairly leaves it to take its chance, and to stand or fall in their opinion as it should happen. And therefore, he did wisely intimate in the beginning of that section, that it must be left to the reader to compare his cautions with what he had said; for there is not one in twenty that will take that pains, and fewer that are able to do it to any purpose, without some assistance. In short, as far as I can judge, (for God only knows the heart,) he saw it was his best way to let his restrictions alone till the last, and to propound his doctrine in round and general words, because he knew the people would more readily swallow it: whereas, if it had been broken into parts, some of which were to be taken and some left, they might prove more nice, when they saw there was a scrupulous difference to be made. But that we may see what force there is in his principle to do such feats as he imagines, I pray, if you can, resolve me one thing.

N. C. What is that?

C. Whether a Roman priest being truly converted (as far as we can judge) may not be made an English minister?

N. C. Yes, surely; what should hinder?

C. I will show you clearly that it must not be, according to his way of reasoning. He tells you that "things abused in false worship must be laid aside[r];" then he tells you, that under the word "things" he comprehends "persons[s];" and lastly, he affirms the papists to be no better than "idolaters[t]." Now show me how any popish priest, who, in his language, is a thing abused (so notoriously) in superstitious and idolatrous worship, may ever be made use of more in the service of God, especially when you consider what a possibility there is that he may be serviceable in the false worship again. For my part, I think, according to his principles, that he ought not only to be laid aside, but to be killed.

N. C. God forbid.

C. Read his third section at your leisure, and tell me what you think of it. For it is like you have such books among you; though we see them but by chance.

[r] [Sect. 2. p. 21.] [s] [Sect. 3. p. 44.] [t] [P. 49.]

N. C. I have it not, nor know when I shall see it. Pray tell me briefly what he says.

C. He tells you, that God "is so impatient of gross and open idolatry, and of such as are guilty of it, that he everywhere breathes forth death against them."

N. C. You have told me enough.

C. Nay, since you have put me upon it, you shall have a little more. "God peremptorily decrees," he says, "that whosoever pleads for idols, offers to them, or performs them any service, shall not only be looked on as unfit to approach him, but also lose his life[u]."

N. C. Since you would not leave off when I would have had you, I will be even with you, and require his reason for this assertion. Doth he bring any place of Scripture that contains so universal a decree, that "whosoever he is that pleads," &c.

C. No: you know his way is, to make his proposition universal, and his proofs particular. He brings you above half a score texts out of the Scripture[x], which speaks of the execution that was to be done upon the seven nations of Canaan, or the apostate Israelites and the priests of Baal; and leaves you to be so kind as to suppose (though he go not about to prove it) that God hath decreed the like against all idolaters whatsoever. And then at last he thus concludes; "How far this concerns the papists, the knowledge of their ways and practice will inform us. That they are idolaters, the best protestant writers affirm: and it will not relieve them to allege that they worship the true God; for so did the Israelites when they worshipped the calf, yet nobody questions but they were guilty of idolatry[y]." I wonder he did not add, "And you very well know, Moses ordered them to be slain."

N. C. I must confess his discourse ought to have ended so, if it be as you relate. And as I do not like it upon that account, so there is another thing that makes me think he is out of the way. There are many that scruple to call the place of your assemblies a church, and yet they would not have them pulled

[u] [P. 45.]

[x] [The passages cited by the author of Nehushtan are Lev. xx. 2. Deut. xiii. 5. Numb. xxxii. 15. Josh. ii. 14; vi. 23; ix. 15. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. Exod. xxii. 20. Deut. xvii. 2. Numb. xxv. 4, 5. 1 Kings xviii. 40. 2 Kings x. 25; xxiii. 5, 20. Zeph. i. 4.]

[y] [P. 49.]

down, (as they must be by these principles;) they being convenient places to meet in for the service of God. And for my part, I would have the cathedrals stand, if it were but to be an ornament to the nation; though I plainly see, his engine, as you call it, will throw them all down, if we suffer it to go to work.

C. He saw this as well as you; and therein could not but discern his principle was bad, because it proved more than he would have it. And therefore, perceiving how it undermined the foundation of all our churches, (except some few lately built,) and being loath such goodly fabrics should tumble down, nay, all the stateliest buildings in Europe be laid in the dust; he, in great compassion, quits his principle, that he might support them. For he tells you, that those only are to be thrown down which "in respect of their situation and figure, or the like, are unfit for profitable uses, and such as remain decked with their idol's attire, and stand among such people as are scandalized with the use of them, and are in such places where there is danger of their return to idolatry;" which a man half blind sees is as much as to say, They are not to be laid aside because they have been employed to idolatry, but for other considerations. He himself confesses as much, when he saith, If they be "in regard of their situation and figure, and the like, fit for profitable uses, &c., they may lawfully be retained[z]:" that is as if he had said, There is no necessity of laying them aside because they were abused in false worship; and therefore my principle is not true which I laid down at the beginning, that "things abused in false worship must be abolished." Are you not amazed that he should be thus forced to forsake his principle, and yet not mend it? Nay, as if he would demonstrate that men are carried by humour and prejudice when they talk of these matters, after all this he would have cathedrals pulled down, as the high places were[a].

N. C. Why? What difference is there?

[z] [Sect. 6. p. 72.]

[a] [P. 73. In support of this extravagant proposal he quotes Beza, in Colloq. Mompelg. part 2. p. 29. (For an account of the conference of Mombelliard in 1586. see La Faye's life of Beza, p. 52.) and Rutherford on Scandal, Q. 6. p. 77. (appended to his "Divine right of church government and excommunication," published by authority,) 4to. Lond. 1646.]

C. For any thing I can see there is none, but they have all the qualifications he mentioned to deserve his favour. Neither the situation nor their figure hinders but they may be fit for profitable uses. I never saw any idol's attire with which they are adorned; nor do they stand among those who are scandalized at them, unless it be such as himself, (and some other humoursome people,) who first take offence at them without any reason, and then make this serve for a reason why they should be pulled down.

N. C. No doubt he hath some reason.

C. If he have, he concealed it, or it must lie in their figure and situation rendering them unfit for profitable uses, or in their remaining decked with their idol's attire: from none of which can there be any thing alleged more against the cathedrals than against other churches; nor so much neither, in some regards. For they may be made to serve many more profitable uses than a small church. But if his people's being offended at them, nobody knows why nor wherefore, must stand alone for a reason; then mark unto what a fine pass he hath brought his business. He hath quitted his ground in this particular to no purpose, and done the churches he thought to save no service at all; for he holds fast one fancy which will not let them stand.

N. C. What is it?

C. I have told it you already, that "if they stand among such as are scandalized at them, they ought not to be retained[b]." Alas poor churches! To what purpose was all this care to keep them from ruin? The quakers and many other people are extremely offended at them, and could be content, with a Gothish barbarism, to demolish them. Or if they were not, we know not when the conceit will take men to be scandalized; and then they must be converted into stables or cow-houses, or what they please; or rather pulled down, for fear they be converted to churches again. And truly when I consider all things, I wonder they were not long ago destroyed upon this very score.

N. C. When were they in danger, I pray you?

C. Upon a petition of the Assembly of Divines, July 19,

[b] [P. 72.]

there was an ordinance (I remember) of Aug. 28, 1643, requiring that "all monuments of superstition and idolatry should be demolished[c];" which was repeated again, to make sure work, May 9, 1644. Now, why churches were not mentioned is hard to tell, for they were dedicated to the honour of some saint or other at the first: and to those saints there was then such an abhorrence, that, as they would not let their images or pictures stand, so, it should seem, their coats of arms, if they had any, were to be defaced. For thus a proviso at the latter end runs: "This ordinance shall not extend to the taking down the image, or picture, or coat of arms, set up for any dead man, who was not commonly reputed a saint." It seems they concluded that none of the reputed saints in their days would be thought so hereafter, (for then no picture or image at all should have been allowed, for fear of being worshipped,) and their words suppose, that any of those (either image, picture, or coat of arms) belonging to any ancient reputed saints must not stand. The churches therefore that bore their names, and were better monuments and remembrances of them than any coat of arms, had good fortune they were not beaten down.

N. C. They had so: but they were fit still for use, and so were not images and pictures.

C. Yet those in the glass windows were fit enough, and served still for the same use they had done before, where they had the wit to turn their heels upward.

N. C. It is like, some had no mind to take any notice of them, but were rather well pleased to pass them by.

C. Perhaps so: for men can pass things by, or take but little notice of them, when they list; though they concern them very much: of which we have an instance in this very writer.

[c] ["Die Lunæ, 28 Augusti, 1643. An ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, for the utter demolishing, removing, and taking away of all monuments of superstition or idolatry," &c.—p. 307. of the following compilation, frequently referred to in the notes to the present work:—

"A Collection of all the publicke Orders and Ordinances and Declarations of both houses of Parliament, from the 9th of March 1642. untill December 1646. together with several of his Majesties proclamations and other papers printed at Oxford." printed by order of the house of Commons, by T. W. for Edward Husband, fol. Lond. 1646.]

For being to treat of things abused, first he tells us of persons, then of names, next of times, and after that of places which have been employed to superstitious or idolatrous uses. And of each of these he discourses in a section by itself. Would not any man have expected now to find one section on purpose about books that have been so abused? Especially since his greatest spite is at the Liturgy, and it is the prime thing he undertook to overthrow? And yet he thrusts this thing into a corner, as some did their glass windows heretofore, not being desirous to meddle much with it, nor having much to say in this matter. I mean, he crowds it in among many other things, at the end of that section about "abused places;" and there you find it under the name of such "utensils as have been devoted to superstitious uses," which are "altars, images, books, relics, vessels, and other instruments" that have been employed in that manner. Now mark, I pray you, in what general terms he speaks of all these together, (for you must not expect to have them distinctly handled:) "Though in themselves (saith he) they are never so innocent, rich, and splendid, yet when once they have been serviceable to such wickedness, he would have them cast away, as things unfit to be retained by those that profess his name." Would you look now to find any limitation of this, and to hear that things fit for God's service may be retained? And yet in this very section he allows this favour to places; and there is the same reason books should enjoy it. And would you not expect a clear proof of this, that even innocent things must be destroyed, (and particularly books employed in idol-worship?) especially since he pretends to justify his assertion by Scripture, and saith, "This appears by divers express precepts which he gave the Israelites to this purpose?"

N. C. Yes, indeed, should I; and I suppose he produces them.

C. Read but pag. 75, and try if you find a syllable spoken to the Israelites about books, or about "innocent things" either. I can see nothing but what concerns their altars, images, and pictures. He tells you, indeed, that whole cities in Canaan, and every thing in them were to be destroyed. But he would not take notice, at the same time, that this was only commandedco ncerning that country; and that there is no proof can be made that there were any innocent books there employed in their idol-worship. No, we conclude rather all were

superstitious and idolatrous in themselves, and such as could never be employed in divine service. It is true, at last he comes to remember us, that in the New Testament we read the Christian converts burnt their curious books, Acts xix. 19. But what is this to the precepts he promised to show us given to the Israelites? And what is this to the business of prayer-books? Nay, why did he not show us the innocence of these books, and prove that conjuring was a very harmless art?

N. C. I wish you would have done with this book of his, which I think in one sense is innocent enough, and will do no harm among considering people.

C. I am content to make an end, for I fear I have been too tedious: but it was out of a desire to examine seriously whether there were such force as he conceives in this engine, "to batter down all the fortifications that they who preside in the church, or their assistants, can erect in defence of the abused scandalous things (as he calls them), which with so much zeal we contend for," viz. the Liturgy and ceremonies. They are his words in his epistle.

N. C. He tells you a little after, that he will not offer to impose his belief on others. Let everybody read, and then do as he finds cause.

C. I commend his ingenuity and modesty, only I wish his zeal was a little less in this matter, and that he would not think himself and others engaged to endeavour to the utmost of their power the extirpation and abolishing of the Liturgy. For what is this but to impose his belief upon us, as much as he is able in his place? Doth he only offer his reasons, who solicits and persuades and intreats men to promote his design? Doth he leave others to judge, who engages their affections, and stirs up their passions, as if the cause were already decided according to his mind? This it is to be zealous to advance a private opinion. He meant, it is like, as he spoke, when he told us in his epistle, that "he expected and desired no more but that we would candidly weigh the case;" but his zeal made him forget himself, and earnestly beseech us to be up and doing, as if judgment were already given on his side. This, I make no doubt, was the thing that put him so much beside the cushion, as to make him magnify the purity of those doctrines, which in sober thoughts he saw were of pernicious consequence. And I

would willingly think it was nothing else that made him only pass his word, that the Liturgy is one of the things that God would have laid aside, without any proof of it: for whatsoever he or the Assembly have been pleased to say, nobody ever made an idol of it[d], or were guilty of adoring it. These are but a kind of conjuring phrases and magical words, which make a great sound, and astonish the silly people, but signify nothing save only this, that men care not what they say to serve their cause; and therefore I hope you will not be affrighted by such bugbears, but come and do your duty to God and man both together, in joining with us in common prayer.

N. C. I will consider it, as I have told you more than once; but I have had the less mind to come to it, because after it is done, your minister prays so coldly himself.

C. That is, he doth not put himself into a sweat. But are not his words lively, and apt to warm the hearts of those who attend to them?

N. C. Methinks not: and beside, his sermons that follow are very dull, and nothing comparable to ours.

[d] ["Prelates and their faction have laboured to raise the estimation of it (the Liturgy) to such an height, as if there were no other worship, or way of worship of God amongst us, but only the service book; to the great hinderance of the preaching of the word, and (in some places, especially of late) to the justling of it out, as unnecessary: or (at best) as far inferior to the reading of Common Prayer, which was made no better than an idol by many ignorant and superstitious people, who pleasing themselves in their presence at that service, and their lip-labour in bearing a part in it, have thereby hardened themselves in their ignorance and carelessnesse of saving knowledge and true piety."—From the preface to the Directory for public worship, put forth by ordinance of parliament, Jan. 3, 164⅘, p. 2.

Among the reasons advanced by Smectymnuus for the alteration of the Liturgy the fourth is, "because it is so much idolized, as that it is accounted the only worship of God in England, and is now made the upholder of a new-preaching ministry; and is cryed up to that height, as that some are not ashamed to say, that the wit of men and angels cannot mend it: and that it is a sufficient discharge of the minister's duty to reade this booke,"—p. 12. Compare their further remarks in their Vindication in reply to bishop Hall's Defence of his Remonstrance, p. 37.

Pearce says "he has known some who thought no worship divine without the Common Prayer. For my part I cannot help counting this an idolizing of the Common Prayer." Conformists' first plea for the Non-Conformists, p. 20. 4to. Lond. 1681.

"To finish this point," says the author of The Anatomie of the service-book, by Dwalphintramis, "I will enforce this conclusion with this argument. We are not to name an Idol, but with detestation: much lesse are we to offer it as a worship of God. But the service or masse-booke is an Idol: *ergo*, we are not

C. Now you are got again to the hole from whence I did drive you a good while ago: you run in a circle of discourse, and are returned thither where we first began. But since I have followed your motions thus far, I will ask you this question, Why do you not rather think yourself dull than him?

N. C. Because I am not dull in other places, and yet was so at your church.

C. You may be in the fault for all that: for perhaps you was disaffected to his person, or to his method of handling things; or you had a greater kindness for some other; and then, though St. Paul himself should preach, you would be apt to prefer that man before him.

N. C. No; methinks his matter is dull and flat.

C. Why, what did you hear him treat of?

N. C. I heard him preach about the necessity of obedience to the laws of Christ. And there he told us how we must do as we would be done unto, and love our neighbours as ourselves, and forgive injuries, and make restitution of ill-gotten goods; with a great many other such like things which everybody knows already. And yet he spent I know not well how many sermons about these common matters.

C. Does everybody know these things, say you? The greater shame then that they live not according to them. I am afraid they are not sensible of the necessity of these things, about which a man of any understanding and seriousness cannot well speak, and be flat and dull. I much suspect that you even set yourself to sleep, or suffered your thoughts to run to other matter, or fell a reading in your Bible, (as I have seen some do,) when he begun to treat of such arguments as these, thinking that you was little concerned in them.

N. C. I must confess part of what you say. For when I come to church, I look not for moral but Christian doctrines[e].

to mention it but with detestation: much lesse to offer it to God as a worship."—p. 8. Compare Abbot's Tryall of Church Forsakers, p. 209; Baillie's letters, ii. 87; Nehushtan, p. 176; and The Old Non-Conformist touching the Book of Common Prayer, p. 2.]

[e] ["'Tis an unjust calumny cast on the protestants by the papists, that they are Solifidians, and against good works. And 'tis an uncharitable censure of the Non-Conformists by the author of the Debate, that they do not preach obedience to the moral law, as well as faith in Christ; and the duties of the second table of the Law, as well as the first. Whoever reads the Assemblies Confession of faith, their larger and shorter Catechism, Mr. Dod on the Commandments, Mr. Anthony Bur-

C. How now? Do you oppose morality and Christianity? Is not the former a part of the latter? I mean, doth not the Christian religion teach us the highest morality?

N. C. No, I think it doth not meddle with it.

C. Then you talk of this as you do of many other things, without understanding. Pray, what is moral doctrine?

N. C. Do you tell me, if you please.

C. I always took it to be that doctrine which teaches us how to regulate our manners, that is, to order and govern our actions, or our whole behaviour in this world. Now I appeal to any man that reads the gospel, whether this be not the very design of it, to teach us to live soberly, righteously, and godlily.

N. C. Is this morality?

C. Yes, that it is: and therefore I said that Christian religion advances morality to the greatest height, because it gives us the best and most excellent motives to live soberly, righteously, charitably and piously in this world.

N. C. For all this, I think it were better if Jesus Christ were more preached.

C. Still I see you deceive yourself, and trouble the world with phrases. Doth not he preach Jesus Christ that preaches his doctrine? If you doubt of it, you shall have scripture enough to prove it.

N. C. But I mean, that the love of Jesus Christ to poor souls should be more preached.

C. I cannot say it should be more preached, but it ought to be preached, and so it is; and perhaps better than you would have it: for his love is declared, to the end we may love him and keep his commandments: this is that which the grace of

gess his Vindiciæ Legis, &c. may see clearly that the Non-Conformists are not libertines (though they desire some liberty), and that though they pray to be delivered and freed from humane ceremonial laws (as God has freed them from the ceremonial law of his own making) yet they are not Antinomians. They commend and in God's name require obedience as well as faith, they commend moral honesty, but prefer piety: we deny him to be a truly godly man that is not a good honest man. We deny him to be righteous before God, that endeavours not to approve himself righteous in his dealings with men. We would not by any means break the two tables, by dashing them one against the other: and yet we prefer the gospel before the law, Christ to Moses, the second covenant to the first, that of grace to that of works," p. 78 of the Humble Apology &c.]

God teaches us, to live soberly, &c. The loving-kindness of God towards mankind in Christ Jesus was expressed for this very purpose. And therefore, he that preaches both these together, is the best and wisest guide with whom to entrust our souls; and that is the design of our minister. He doth not tickle us merely with a soft story of the great love of Jesus Christ towards sinners, but labours to beget in us an ardent love to him; and lest we should run away with a pleasant fancy, he makes us understand wherein this love consists, viz. in obedience to him to the very death, in meekness, humility, patience, taking up the cross, and suchlike graces; which seem to be rough things, and have no amiableness in the eye of the world; but are as dear to all those who love our Saviour as their very lives. And this makes me think him the more sincere and honest, that he doth not seek so much to please us in his preaching as to profit us.

N. C. Profit do you call it? I could never profit by him at all.

C. Whose fault was that? yours, or his? You are loath to suspect yourself, and inclined to lay all the load on others. I believe it will be found at the great day, that he hath done his duty better than you.

N. C. That is a thing which neither you nor I know. But this I am sure of, that I can profit more by others than by him.

C. Let me try the truth of that, if you please, for I very much doubt of it.

N. C. I am sure of it.

C. If you profit so much, then your ministers make you wiser and better than you were before: for there are but these two things that argue proficiency. Now do as much as answer me the first. Wherein are you wiser than you were? What one thing do you know that you did not understand before, or might have understood easily when you pleased? What things do you now understand the reason of better than formerly? Or what account can you give me of the grounds of Christian faith, and of the hope that is in you? What rules of prudence have you met withal? What explication of scripture? I was going to ask, what point in divinity you are able to state with judgment and due caution? But that is too hard a question.

N. C. I am not able presently to call things to mind. But

this I am sure of, that I get more good by them than any men that ever I heard.

C. That is, you are grown better: wherein, I beseech you? Are your carnal affections more mortified? Are your passions more subdued to reason? Are you more humble and lowly in heart? More meek, more merciful, more compassionate to all men, more affable, more courteous? I am afraid in this last point you are grown better as sour ale doth in summer, that is, more sharp and eager.

N. C. Methinks I have much more comfort.

C. That is strange, when you are neither wiser nor better, as far as I can discern. One would think you should suspect them to be foolish and deceitful comforts; because they have so little ground, except it be in your imagination.

N. C. Why? Would you have me fetch my comforts from myself, and not from Jesus Christ?

C. Now I see indeed how wise you are grown by this profound question.

N. C. Must not all our comfort be fetched from Jesus Christ?

C. Yes: but everybody cannot fetch it. They are the weary and heavy laden, and such as take upon them his yoke and burden, i. e. submit to his commands, whom he invites, and promises ease and refreshment unto. By which you may see, if you will, that we must feel something that is good in ourselves, (and more than good desires, and affections, and purposes,) before we can feel that solid comfort and satisfaction you speak of.

N. C. Then, it seems, we must fetch our comfort from our own selves.

C. No: but it seems you are grown so wise, and taken up in such high notions, that you cannot understand common sense. Is there any other comfort you dare give to an ungodly man besides this; that he may, by the grace of our Lord, be made better, and so received into his favour?

N. C. I think not.

C. Then, before you can take that full comfort in him which you talk of, you must feel that you are truly changed and converted to a love of godliness, and a life according to those good affections. All the good, indeed, that is in us, all that

we hope for, we derive from our Saviour Christ; but till we become good, and be made like him, we do put ourselves into a fool's paradise, if we fancy that we are in his favour, and that he will carry us to heaven. And, on the contrary, when we are once made partakers of his blessed nature and Spirit, how can we choose but be full of joy, both in that resemblance we find in ourselves to him, and much more in the hopes he hath given us, that he will perfect those beginnings in eternal life? But it is as plain, that though we cannot but rejoice very much in that which we feel in ourselves, (the likeness of Christ and good hopes,) yet the original of his joy and satisfaction is not from ourselves, but him who gave us that participation of his nature and those good hopes.

N. C. I do not well understand you. But this I know, that you all talk as if we were to bring something to Christ, and not to take all from him.

C. Rather to talk thus is to be very ridiculous: for he invites us to come to him, i. e. to believe on him, and become his disciples and followers. And this we must do, or else be disowned by him; though, when we do it, we only obey his heavenly call, and bring him nothing but only all our desires and affections to be governed by him. Is there anybody so absurd as to imagine we must not give up ourselves to be led and guided by him in his ways? And when we are in them, does anybody think we came there without his motion and gracious attraction? Would you have us, without any more ado, conclude that all the promised blessings are our portion? Or, must we not first be persuaded our Saviour tells us the truth of God, and then purpose to learn of him and obey him, and next set ourselves with all our might to subdue every thought and passion to his obedience, and, last of all, order all our actions (by the assistance of the same grace whereby we do the rest) according to the rule of his laws? And must we not have a sense that we are sincere in all this, before we can reasonably expect that he should give us all the good things he promises? In short, must he not give us his grace to will and to do? and must we not receive it, and effectually do thereby all that I have said, before we conclude our sins are pardoned, and take the confidence to hope our Saviour will give us eternal life?

N. C. I perceive you pretend to have profited very much by your minister.

C. Yes, indeed: I think I am grown wiser a great deal, and much better.

N. C. I wish you would tell me briefly wherein.

C. I know God and his attributes better, and perceive how all religion depends on that knowledge. I think also I understand the nature of religion in general, and of Christianity in particular, more exactly than I did. I know wherein religion consists, with the grounds of faith, and the reason why I am a Christian rather than of any other profession. And withal, I hope I understand many places of holy Scripture, and am able to give a clearer and soberer account of them than heretofore; when, as I ingenuously confess, I was wont to expound the word of God by fancy, and not by serious and attentive considerations. And, as for growth in goodness, I may truly say, I have learnt many things to be my duty which I scarce ever heard you speak of. As, for example, to bridle my tongue, especially when I speak of my superiors; to reverence my governors; to live in obedience to laws, though they happen to hinder my private profit; and for that end to look upon human laws as binding the conscience; to answer my betters with great modesty and humility. In particular, not to contend boldly and malapertly with the priest, as if I were upon equal ground with him; nor to be a busybody, and a gadder from house to house; not to pry into everybody's secrets; not to rejoice in iniquity, or take a pleasure in hearing of the sins of the contrary party; to be very fearful of making a schism in the church; and, to name no more, to take heed of itching ears, and not to run from my own church, out of a fancy that I can profit more in other places.

N. C. Well, talk as long as you please, all the godly will follow those men whom you would persuade me to forsake.

C. I am heartily sorry to see your arrogance and uncharitableness. But it gives me to understand how much you profit by your ministers, not in the graces of Christ, but in the peculiar unheard-of virtues of your sect, pride, boasting, good opinion of yourselves, contempt of others, and rash judging, even of men's spiritual estates.

N. C. I think you judge rashly of me.

C. No such matter. Your censoriousness and rashness is apparent; and I do not commit the same fault when I take notice of it. And I must let you know that you commit another like this, when you make an outcry through the nation, and tell the people that all ungodliness hath overflown it only since bishops and common prayer came home again. Which is an arrant lie, as will be made good, if need be, against the best of you. For it began to break in upon us when the bishops and all good order was thrown down, and the kingdom put into arms. Then men ran into excess of riot, when there was no restraint upon them. I will not say into so much drunkenness, but into whoring, (I may add, atheism and irreligion,) and suchlike wickedness, which are said now to be the reigning sins. And though men were not presently openly lascivious and profane, (for the older wickedness grows the bolder it is,) yet then they got loose from their chains, and these works of darkness secretly lurked, and were privately practised.

N. C. I do not believe you.

C. You will believe the Assembly, I am sure; and they say so.

N. C. Where?

C. In their petition to the parliament of July 19, 1643[e]; where they desire, (in the seventh branch of it,) "that some severe course may be taken against fornication, adultery, and incest: which do greatly abound," say they, "ESPECIALLY OF LATE, BY REASON OF IMPUNITY[f]."

N. C. I am not concerned about this. But I affirm the generality of the godly people now follow us.

C. Suppose they did: you will not allow it a good argument in other cases, to say that all the godly for many ages did such and such things: for instance, use a form of prayer, and such ceremonies as ours; and therefore why do you keep such a stir with it now? But where did you get a list of all the godly,

[e] [Misprinted 1644. after ed. 1.]

[f] ["This Petition being read in both houses, answer was returned to the divines that presented it to this effect: 'that the Petition was very well approved, that both houses had agreed to have a publike fast in all the places mentioned in the petition, on the Friday then next following, being July 21. (which accordingly was very solemnly performed by both houses of parliament and the Assembly altogether, as well as by the cities,) and that they would take the other particulars into speedy consideration.'"—p. 6. of the original pamphlet. See also Lords' Journals, July 19. 1643.]

that you can tell so exactly the major part follow you? Were they ever brought to the poll? and who were judges, I pray you, in the case? You do but still persist in your over-fond love to yourselves, and your own party and way, when you talk in this manner; for there are many ways to show that they are far from being the generality of the godly that flock to your meetings.

N. C. Then you allow that some godly people follow us.

C. Did I ever dispute it? Nay, does there anybody doubt (except yourselves and the papists) but that there may be godly people of every sect and party? But then it is an imperfect sort of godliness which we acknowledge in them; and we hope God will bear with their defects, when they are sincerely humble and modest, and do not fancy themselves the only or the most godly people in the world. And if you will have me speak my mind plainly, and not be angry, I think I may say, without any rashness, that your godly people are generally of the lowest form in Christ's school, as I told you before. A great deal of their religion is of their own making, (as I lately showed you,) and they want a great deal of God's religion.

N. C. You are very envious.

C. No, truly. I admire the grace of God wheresoever I see it, for it is the most lovely sight that can present itself to me. But I cannot allow them to be such excellent Christians as you imagine: they rather appear to me with many deformities; for they are ever wrangling about little ceremonies; they break the peace of the church by this means, and seem to make no scruple about it; they are froward and peevish; greedy of riches; stubborn in their opinions; and by no means can bear with any man differing from them in matters of doctrine. In short, I see a strange ignorance, mixed with presumption and wilfulness, not without a high degree of superstition, in those whom you admire for godliness. But then there is a sort of people who enjoy that name among you, in whom I can see nothing but an humour of despising and railing at all ancient received customs, how good soever; together with a sullen devotion, and such a turbulent nature as will give no rest to themselves or others. And they have one peculiar quality, proper to themselves alone, which is to revile

our ministers, even as they go along the streets: a thing which I could never observe our ungodly people to be guilty of towards your ministers, who may pass peaceably enough: nay, I think, is not committed in any country in the world where they are of different religions. Perhaps you will say, that ours would do it, did not the power of the Lord overawe them, and shut up their mouths, that they may not reproach his faithful servants. But this is only a cast of your skill in searching the hearts of men; and gives us a taste of the opinion you have of your dearness to God.

N. C. I doubt not but they are very dear to God; and that God will reprove even kings for their sakes, saying, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*

C. You have a strong faith. But methinks, before you suffer it to grow to such a confidence, you should soberly consider whether some of those precious ones may not be anointed——; that make godliness a pretence for their disobedience to kings, and sauciness towards their betters; that flatter you into a conceit of your godliness, that you may flatter them with the title of the Prophets of the Lord. To me it is no mean argument of their want of integrity, that they teach you no better, and connive at all this wickedness, and never (that I could hear of) lay bare and rebuke these sins that reign so much among your party. Tell me, whence came all the scurrilous pamphlets that are abroad? Out of what shop do the venomous libels fly about the town? Who are they that not only despise our clergy, but put open affronts on them as they quietly and soberly walk the streets? that have the poison of asps under their lips, and spit it in good men's faces? that in a fearful manner scorn and revile their holy calling, and salute them every where with the ordinary name of Baal's priests[g]?

[g] ["A fourth way to make the clergy odious to the people was their abetting all outrages and affronts done to the persons and functions of the clergy; insomuch that upon their sending for Burton and Pryn and Bastwick (three champions or puritan beutifews), and the audacious riots and tumults attending their returne to London without controll, the faction took such encouragement (having found their strength in the house of Commons) in their contempt of the priests, that a divine in his habit could not walke the streets of London without being reproached in every corner by name of Baal's priest, popish priest, Cæsar's friend, and the like scoffings; nor durst parishioners show their wonted love toward their spirituall

Are they not all bred up in your churches? Do they not all frequent your meetings? And do not bystanders of your persuasion laugh and rejoice when they see this contempt poured on them? Do they not seem to encourage those by their applauses, who are so rude and insolent in their behaviour toward good men? And yet these style themselves the godly, and take it ill if we do not think them so[h]. These you are content to wink at, that your congregations may be full. Your ministers dare not preach down these abuses, lest they should be thought to be friends to Baal.

N. C. There will be some bad people every where.

C. I am glad to hear you say so. By and by you will confess that there may be also good people every where, and that some of our ministers may be good; though your revilers make no difference, but if they see a man in a cassock, presently throw dirt in his face, and call him a limb of antichrist, or some such thing. So brutish and outrageous are the passions of this heady people. So wonderfully do they profit in your school in those new virtues of hatred to ancient customs and habits, though never so innocent; and hatred or anger to all that are not of their way. For such is the fire I have sometimes seen in their eyes when they meet one of our ministers, that one would think they had a mind to burn them up. And I make no doubt they would call upon your prophets, if they were but like Elijah, to call for fire down from heaven to consume us. You may condemn their folly perhaps; but whatsoever you are pleased to say, they are the most zealous of your party, and think themselves the most godly. And for any thing I can hear, they may think so still: it not being

father, nay, scarce durst they come to hear him preach without hazzard of being accounted a malignant." —Persecutio Undecima, p. 21. published in 1648.]

[h] [Fuller mentions it as one of the charges brought against Cartwright in 1590, "that from time to time since his abode in Warwick, by his practice and dealing he hath nourished a faction, and heartburning of one inhabitant there against another, severing them in his own and his followers' speeches, by the name of 'the godly,' or 'brethren favouring sincerity' and the 'profane.'"—C. H. book ix. vol. v. p. 149.

"This," says Hooker, "hath bred high terms of separation between such and the rest of the world, whereby the one sect are named 'the brethren,' 'godly,' and so forth, the other, worldlings, time-servers, pleasers of men not of God, with such like."—Preface to Eccles. Pol. chap. iii. § 11. vol. i. p. 151.]

the manner of your preaching, to meddle with such things as these; nor the time, I doubt, to be named when you heard a sermon to reprove the scurrilous and railing language of some among you against the English clergy. No, the way hath been, and I doubt still continues, to declaim only against superstition, and formality, and will-worship, and sometimes against morality; and then to exhort the people to prize ordinances, and seek after pure ordinances, and admit of no human mixtures. But whilst the poor people are thus affrighted, and made exceeding timorous, lest they should be righteous overmuch, by following vain traditions of men; they have little or no fear wrought in them of being wicked overmuch, by schism, and disobedience, and letting loose their furious passions and unruly tongues; by reviling God's ministers, nay, by despising governments, and speaking evil of dignities.

N. C. I think they should be taught to fear these things more than they do.

C. Aye, and they should be taught not to think themselves godly too soon. Whereas the manner hath been quite contrary, to breed in them an opinion of their piety; if they be but a praying people, and follow ordinances, and frequent private meetings. And when they are taught on such easy terms to call themselves gracious and godly, then your ministers make this an argument against us, that all or most of the godly are on their side. And now it comes into my mind that this was the pretence wherewith they countenanced the late rebellion, as now, I suppose, you will give us leave to call it. But to let you see how idle and frivolous such arguments were, and that they might serve anybody's purpose; it was not long before you were numbered among the ungodly: for the army learnt to call themselves the only godly party, and in a manner excluded you. Though, I believe, you would have liked it well enough, if a painter had drawn a man with his eyes lifted up to heaven, and one hand on his breast, with the other hand in his neighbour's purse, or cutting of his throat, and writ over it this inscription, 'An army saint.' I mean, you thought them an ungodly and untoward generation. But whatsoever you thought, the argument was as plausible and successful for them as it had been and is for you: for the people were strangely drawn away by it. This cut off the king's head, that it was

for the safety of the godly. This was in a fair way to keep our present sovereign from returning to us; that those that feared the Lord were against it, and would be undone by it. And I find that to this day this pretence of godliness hath left an impression on some people's minds, and excuseth all those impieties. For not long since I heard one commending them for a very gracious people: and when it was soberly objected, that they were unjust, and even cruel, and false, and turbulent, and disobedient to their governors, and troublers to the nation; it was answered, that notwithstanding all these things, there was more grace among them than there is to be found nowadays. Meaning, I suppose, by their *grace*, that they were a praying people, and much in seeking God. As if St. Paul did not understand himself when he told us, that *the grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and all worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.* And, to deal freely with you, I am much afraid there are many of this kind of godly people whom you associate yourselves withal; I am sure, some of those who were patrons to their wickedness, and allowed, if not justified, the killing of the king, and were army-chaplains, are now private teachers, and not a little adored.

N. C. Well, no more of this. For I am satisfied we are not the only godly. But yet I am still inclined to think there is more of the power of godliness to be found among us than any where else.

C. I always thought the power of godliness did not consist in words, but in a great measure of humility, and a great measure of charity; together with exact justice and meekness, and peaceableness, and purity of heart. Now methinks there is not such store of this among you as one would expect; at least, not more than we see in other people.

N. C. Do you call this the power of godliness?

C. Yes; and so doth the apostle; as will appear, if you think good that we consider seriously together the character he gives of those that deny the power of godliness, and content themselves only with the show or image of it; which he calls *the form of godliness.*

N. C. With all my heart. For that will be a better way of spending our time, and edifying one another, than the continuing dispute will be.

C. You say very well, and I love you for that sense of piety which you discover. Let us take the book then, and read what St. Paul teaches us in 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4, &c. concerning them that want the *power*, and have only the *form of godliness*. First, he tells us, they are *lovers of themselves*, i. e. as I understand it, study above all things their own profit, credit, honour and pleasure. From which (as the root of wickedness) they grow to be *covetous*, or lovers of money; and then *boasters*, that is, people who magnify themselves, arrogating to themselves more than is their due; and bragging they can do that which they are not able to perform. From whence it follows that they are *proud*, that is, contemners and despisers of others, who perhaps are better than themselves: *blasphemers*, i. e. of magistrates and dignities, (upon a pretence, perhaps, that they have nothing of God in them, or are antichristian) *disobedient to* their natural *parents*, (as some now are, because they say they are unsanctified and unregenerate people;) *unthankful* to their benefactors: *unholy* and impure wretches, or, as some have expounded it to me, such as make no difference between things sacred and profane: *without natural affection*, viz. to their children or kindred, as well as parents: *truce-breakers*, or perfidious people, whom no bond or tie can hold to their promises or duty: *false-accusers*, or such as calumniate, and tell false and devised stories, to the prejudice of those whom they do not love, or set themselves to oppose: *incontinent*, which, I have been told, signifies such as have no power over themselves and their passions, and as are inconsistent with themselves: *fierce*, that is, bloody-minded men, and such whom no kindness, no benefits can reconcile to society, friendship, or modesty: *despisers of those who are good*, (i. e. that have no kindness for men who are solidly good,) or, as our translation seems to take it, such as contemn true virtue as a mean thing: *traitors*, that is, such as will betray their best friends and companions for to serve their own interest: *heady*, that is, rash, inconsiderate, impudent and bold people; ready for any bad design: *high-minded*, or men puffed up or swollen with an opinion of themselves, of their own knowledge, suppose, or piety: *lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God*, or such as pretend to God, only to have a better opportunity to satisfy their desires of pleasure. And in conclusion he tells us, that

they were of this number, who in those days crept into folks' houses, and insinuated themselves into the favour of silly women; having a design either upon their wealth or their chastity. And women they were for their turn; being *led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth;* that is, always frequenting Christian assemblies, but getting no good by them: or else opening their ears to every wind of doctrine, desiring still to hear some new thing, running from place to place where any novel teachers were: but remaining just as wise as they were before, and not a whit the better for all the sermons they heard.

N. C. Methinks you have made me a short sermon, at least I have heard the doctrinal part of it: would you would come to the use, and tell me what you gather from hence.

C. I gather two things, and leave you to gather the rest.

N. C. What are they?

C. First, that all this wickedness which I have described from the apostle will consist with a form or show of godliness: for that is a part of the character of these very men, verse 5, *having a form of godliness*, &c. Secondly, I collect from hence, that those men have the *power of godliness* who are of a disposition quite opposite to them now named: such, I mean, "as deny themselves for God's and their neighbour's sake; that set not their hearts upon getting riches; that are humble and modest; that reverence their governors, and study in word and deed to preserve their authority; that honour their parents, though not of their opinion, or perhaps ungodly; that are sensible of benefits, and grateful to their benefactors; that study purity and chastity; that are kind and tenderly-affected to their relations, that keep their faith and perform their promises, though to their own damage; that are easily reconciled if they have been grossly injured; that speak well, if they can, of their neighbours, and are not ready to believe every story of them; that endeavour to preserve an even temper; that command their passions, are steady and uniform in their actions; that are meek and submissive, peaceable and sociable; that love virtue wheresoever they see it, and do not despise or reproach it under the name of mere morality; that are faithful to their trust; sober, advised, and considerate in their undertakings; that have no high opinion of themselves, and love

God above all things; that choose rather to keep at home and mind their own concerns, than to be prying into the secrets of their neighbours' houses; that have no other design upon any, either man or woman, than to make them good, and further their increase in true wisdom. These, and such like men, in whatsoever place you find them, undoubtedly have the *power of godliness,* though they should not talk of it so much as others."

N. C. I see you are able to preach, if you list.

C. If I should think so, I should run into the company of those proud and high-minded men whom I now spake of. I can only repeat a good sermon to you which I have heard.

N. C. You would have me preach, or at least make a piece of a sermon; for you told me you would leave me to gather the rest from your discourse.

C. It is profitable to preach to yourself such things as you read and hear, and to press upon your heart such truths as you cannot but observe plainly follow from them, though they were not named.

N. C. And what do you think I should gather from what I have heard you say?

C. I told you it would be best to leave you to consider what further use is to be made of this character. But if you would have me direct you, then you may be pleased to consider, when you are alone by yourself, whether any part of it belong to those whom you call godly, or to those whom we esteem so; or, which is all one, you may consider whether those opposite qualities, wherein I told you the *power of godliness* consists, be to be found most among your or our godly: always carrying this in your mind, that we do not call all them godly who are of our party, as you are wont to do. Our ministers, I assure you, will not allow them to enjoy this name who are lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, false, fierce, heady, &c. But whether many such do not pass with you for godly men, and cry out against the form of godliness while they have little else, I leave you to judge. And if you chance to meet with Mr. Gillespie's Miscellany Questions, (a book you much value, I know,) he may assist you, and put it out of doubt, whether you "ought not to avoid those who now Pharisaically and Donatistically appropriate to themselves the name of the

godly party, (as his words are, chap. xiii.) as being indeed such who, under pretence of zeal for the power of godliness, hold divers ungodly principles[i]."

N. C. Truly, I thought once that the *power of godliness* had consisted in keeping the sabbath, in repeating sermons, having a gift of prayer, and using it in our families, treasuring up and communicating experiences, and meeting together to exercise our gifts. And now it comes into my mind on a sudden, this is a thing which hath made me fear you want at least a great deal of the *power of godliness*, that you never kept a day together.

C. Strange! I thought, on the contrary, that this had been one of our accusations, our keeping too many days.

N. C. Really, I never heard that any of you kept one.

C. What! did you never hear that we have a holy-day at least once a month, and sometimes more, which we always observe?

N. C. Pish! I perceive you understand not my language. I mean, that we keep a private day together, which we set apart for prayers, and humbling ourselves before God, and hearing the word.

C. Alas! how should I guess at your meaning? whenas I

[i] ["A Treatise of Miscellany Questions, wherein many useful questions and cases of conscience are discussed and resolved, for the satisfaction of those who desire nothing more than to search for and find out precious truths in the controversies of these times."—This work was published in the year following the death of its author, George Gillespie (which took place Dec. 17, 1648) by his brother Patrick, minister at Glasgow. It consists of a series of papers, twenty-two in number, chiefly relating to topics debated in the Westminster Assembly; to which the writer was deputed one of the Commissioners from Scotland, and in which arena he became conspicuous for his controversial powers, proving himself, in erudition and mastery of argument, a successful opponent to Selden himself. Much of the work bears traces of having been composed during the period in question. To Gillespie we are indebted, together with Lightfoot and Baillie, for much interesting matter connected with that Assembly, in the form of journals of their proceedings from day to day; all of which have, at recent periods, been given to the public. His Notes were first printed in the collection of his works published at Edinburgh in 1846, in the series called the Presbyterian's Armory, with a Memoir of the Author by Dr. W. M. Hetherington.

The passage quoted in the text forms part of the heading to ch. 13, vol. ii. p. 67.]

thought you would have kept no days but that of God's appointing.

N. C. Yes, we can keep other days, and think we ought; at least that there is much religion in it.

C. Why then will you not keep those which your governors appoint? Have you power to appoint days, and not they? I am sorry to see your partiality, and that you are so full of humour, as not to do things when you are bidden, and yet to do the same when you are not bidden, nay, when you are forbidden.

N. C. Oh, but we do not keep days as you do.

C. What is that to the purpose? Seeing what we do is good, why should you not join with us in it? You pray, and so do we: you read the Scriptures, and so do we: you give thanks to God, and that is part of our business: only we do it in public, and you in private; we when our governors would have us, and you when it pleases yourselves.

N. C. We not only pray, but hear a sermon also, when we keep our days.

C. So you may at some of our churches, if you please, every holy-day. But what a foolish conceit is this, to think that this makes a day not to be well observed if we want a sermon! This is a piece of the superstition I told you of. For was it not always the chief design of those days we observe to acknowledge God; to praise him in all his wonderful works; to meditate on his admirable mercy in sending his Son, in giving him to die for us, in raising him from the dead, in sending the Holy Ghost, and after that the blessed apostles to preach the gospel? And is not this sufficient work for one day? Or cannot we meditate upon the holy Scriptures then read, or on the sermon we heard the Lord's day before, but we must needs have a new sermon, or else think God is not glorified, nor well pleased? I am amazed at the gross absurdity of such fancies.

N. C. You may be so; but we shall never leave them, nor come to church, till you have more than common prayer on those days.

C. I cannot understand any reason for that resolution: for if you be not satisfied with our service, but yet must needs have something else, why do you not come to the public

prayers and praises first, and then make up their defects (as you conceive) in your private meetings? Or why do you not seek and endeavour that these days may be kept more religiously, seeing public praising God is far better than private, and doth him more honour in the world? For my part, I verily think, (and I speak it sincerely,) that if you would come to church, and there join in the public service of God; and then go home, and spend some other part of the day in catechising your children, instructing your servants, teaching them, among other matters, how to use the liberty you then allow them discreetly and soberly, and in visiting, inviting, or relieving your poor neighbours; it would be a thing far more acceptable to God, and more for the honour of Christian religion and the good of souls, than a whole day of prayer and hearing sermons.

N. C. I am not yet of that mind.

C. Why? look over all the families you know, and see if many of them be not miserably neglected, whilst their masters and mistresses are keeping days, as you call it; and then tell me whether they spend their time to so much profit and true comfort as I would have them.

N. C. I think some may be too negligent.

C. Why do not your ministers chide them, and exhort the good women to keep more at home, and not, under a notion of religion, neglect their necessary duties? It were easy to tell you of some who are the worst wives, and mothers, and mistresses in the parish, merely upon this account, that most of their time hath been taken up in gadding about to those private exercises. Sometimes you are mightily offended at our holy-days upon this account, that they take up too much of men's time from their business; and yet you can be content to see a day set apart every week, if not oftener, by yourselves, to the great damage of many families. And so, when the fit is upon you, we are told that magistrates ought not to bind the people to observe days, which is to make that necessary which God hath left free[k]. But yet notwithstanding you yourselves stick not to lay such a necessity upon men of observing days, now and then, as if there were a Divine commandment for it;

[k] [Compare the objections to festivals of the Church noticed in the author's Treatise of Repentance, part 2. chap. 14. vol. iv. p. 599.]

for you think they have no religion, or want the power of it, that do not. And what a stir do you keep to have lectures on the week-days, as if we were dead, and had but a name to live, unless we hear a sermon or two then! Whereas very good Christians, perhaps, have no more time to spare from their honest employments than they ought to bestow in private prayer and meditation; digesting of what they heard the Sunday before; searching seriously into their consciences, and constant examination of their lives and actions; in conferring with their ministers about their doubts, or those indispositions, or perhaps ill-inclinations, which they find in their souls; in comforting the poor and the sick; in endeavouring to reconcile differences among neighbours; in consulting how to advance the public good either of the city or town where they live; and discharging the public office well to which they may be called. If, after all this done, they can find any leisure to hear a sermon, who is there that forbids it? We are only afraid lest, whilst the necessity of that is so much urged, things more necessary should be neglected.

N. C. You say a great many notable things, but yet to me you seem a man of a slight spirit, which you betray when you speak of these weighty matters.

C. If you mean that I slight many of those things which you think matters of great weight and moment, I cannot contradict you: but why you should thence conclude I have a slight spirit, I see no cause; for therefore I slight them, because I have thoroughly considered and examined them, and find there is nothing but fancy or superstition at the bottom of them. Mistake me not, your honest affections I do not slight; but the things to which you are so affected. As for instance, you abound in insignificant phrases, and scripture expressions misapplied; you have a great many superstitious conceits and opinions, and ofttimes allege your experiences very absurdly.—

N. C. Nay, now you discover yourself. Doth not this argue a profane spirit, to slight experiences, when the apostle mentions Christian *experience* as a part of our rejoicing and glory? Rom. v. 4.

C. I do not slight his experiences, but yours; and not all of yours neither. For if by your experience you meant, that you had made a proof of your constancy and faithfulness to Christ,

by patient enduring of any affliction for righteousness' sake; and made a trial also of his faithfulness, in performing his promises of giving us strength, support, and comfort, (which I conceive is the apostle's meaning:) I should accuse myself of great profaneness should I slight it. But when you will needs give me this word for a proof of a thing, of which I know you have no experience, and perhaps can have none, and when you allege your experience in a matter of reason, and in effect say no more than this, 'I pray believe me;' you must not take it ill if I make light of it. As, for example; when you will tell us you find by experience that you are in the right way, it is a thing that may be entertained with a smile: it is in truth no better than to say, You may take my word for it. For whether you be in the right or no, is not to be known by experience, but by reason. In like manner, if you tell me you find by experience your minister is a good man because he doeth you good, it is a frivolous argument, and I may be allowed to slight it; for it cannot be known by your experience what he is: you can only know by your experience that you are made better; but he may be bad enough, notwithstanding. As the Quakers were reformed of cheating and cozenage in some places by those who, there is great reason to suspect, were cheating knaves themselves.

N. C. But I may know by experience whether the things he preaches be true or no.

C. It will deceive you, if you rely upon that proof: for you may have some good done you by false principles. Nay, those very principles may make you do some things well, which shall make you do other things ill.

N. C. That is strange.

C. Not so strange as true. For what principle was it that led the Quakers to be just in their dealing?

N. C. That they ought to follow the light within them.

C. This led them also to be rude and clownish, and disrespectful to governors. For all is not reason that is in us; there is a world of fancy also: and the flashes of this now and then are very sudden and amazing, just like lightning out of a cloud. By this they find they were misled in many things, which they have now forsaken; being content to wear hatbands and ribbons too, which they so much at the first abominated.

N. C. I take them to be a deluded people.

C. And yet they are led, they will tell you, by experience. For they found themselves amended by entering into that religion, whereas they cheated and cozened in all other forms wherein they were before. And therefore, do not tell me any more of the good you feel you have got by your private meetings, nor make it an argument of their lawfulness. For the same argument will be used against yourselves by the Quakers, who will tell you God is in no private meetings but only theirs, for otherwhere they could never find him. Take your choice; and either let it alone yourselves, or else allow it them. It will either serve both or neither.

N. C. But I have seen you smile, if one bring his experience to prove the truth of Christian religion.

C. Yes, and very deservedly: because the ground upon which we believe it to be true cannot be known by experience; nor is your experience of any thing in it a ground for any other man to believe it. You cannot know, for instance, by your experience, that our Saviour was born of a virgin, that the Holy Ghost came upon him at his baptism with a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* You cannot know by that means that he died, that he rose the third day, that he went to heaven forty days after, and after ten days more gave the Holy Ghost; and that St. Paul was struck blind with the glory of our Saviour, whom he saw and heard, and was sent by him to preach the gospel.

N. C. Yes, I feel that he and the rest of the apostles speak the very truth.

C. They say all these things, and do you know them by your feeling? The apostles indeed felt, or saw, or heard them; but we cannot do so, nor know them by any other means than their testimony,

N. C. I feel that their testimony is true.

C. What! Do you feel that they say true, for instance, when they tell you that our Saviour turned water into wine, and that he raised Lazarus from the dead?

N. C. No, I know these things otherways.

C. Then you must know the rest by the same means that you know these, viz. by believing eye-witnesses of these things, who you find are persons worthy to be credited.

N. C. But I feel the commands of Christ are exceeding good, and agreeable to human nature, which the apostles have delivered to us.

C. That is, you find it good to live soberly, and peaceably, to be charitable to others, and to take up your own cross with contentedness and patience.—

N. C. Yes.

C. But may not these things be felt by heathens as well as you? And may not they by experience commend the practice of these virtues to us?

N. C. I think they have done it.

C. Then this experience of the goodness of Christ's commands is no proof of our creed, by which we are distinguished from heathens. No, nor will your experience prove to any man that Christ's commands are excellent, any further than he believes that you say true, when you tell him what trial you have made of the best kind of life, and that you are a person fit to judge of the difference of things.

N. C. Methinks I feel that Jesus Christ is in the heavens, and in great power and glory there.

C. Whatsoever you feel in this matter, it is the effect of your belief, not the cause of it. I mean, you first believe that he is in glory, before you can feel any good hopes in your soul of immortal life. And you believe his being in glory upon good reasons, else you do not know, but you[1] entertain yourself with a pleasant dream both of his glory and yours. And lastly, whatever you feel, it is no proof of the truth of the thing, but only of the truth of your belief. It is to be proved otherwise that Christ reigns gloriously in the heavens, and is able to bring us into his everlasting kingdom: only your being so mightily affected with it proves that indeed you believe it. But you had best look you have good reasons for your faith. For all the severities of the religious men among the Turks prove likewise that they believe strongly in Mahomet; though I hope, if they quote their experiences never so much, you will not be a disciple to their prophet, and hope he will take you by the hair of the head, and pull you up to heaven.

N. C. I find that you are able to talk more rationally than I can in these matters. But yet I find likewise there is another

[1] ['you' om. ed. 1, 2.]

kind of spirit in our people than in yours. For they delight more in heavenly discourse, and are alway talking of religion when they are together: which argues they are not of so slight a spirit as others, who love to discourse of unprofitable things.

C. Do you and I talk frothily, (as your phrase is,) and spend our time in unprofitable chat? Is this discourse earthly, and not at all pertaining to religion? And, deal sincerely with me, do not you sometime, when you are together, pass the time away in speaking against bishops and common prayer, and the government? Do you not know some that are ever complaining of the times in which we live, and saying, The former days were better than these? And are the reasons of this murmuring so heavenly as you suppose? Do they not say the nation was in more credit, and had a better reputation abroad, and they a better trade at home, and such like things?——

N. C. I cannot deny but I have heard some professors talk thus. But there are a great number that you shall scarce ever hear talking of any thing else but heaven and Jesus Christ, and the business of their souls.

C. And such people there are in all parties and sects in the Christian world; who perhaps are never a whit the better for that.

N. C. How irreligiously you talk!

C. Not at all: for, unless they take a true delight in God, and in that heavenly discourse above all other things, and unless they understand what they say, and delight also to do God's will in all things; I think they had as good be talking of or doing something else.

N. C. Can they possibly be better employed?

C. Yes, that they may: for if they only tumble out a great many words and phrases which they have learned, they had better be studying what the religion of Jesus Christ is. And if they talk of those matters merely as it is a duty, and be not so heavenly minded as that whensoever they have leisure it is the greatest joy that can be to be thinking or discoursing of them; they will do this after a very bad fashion, when some other good thing they might have done better, as visited the sick, inquired after the wants of the poor, or ordered some parish business. And, again, unless they be very prudent, and do not think they must needs draw the company wherein they

are (who are engaged, perhaps, in other necessary business) to hear their discourse, I think their room, as we say, would be better than their company; or, that it were better that they would hold their peace. For if a man take himself to be bound in conscience to be always speaking of these things, (as I doubt many do,) it is the effect of superstition, which makes religion a great burden to a man's self and others. For whether he and the company be disposed or no, this he thinks is his business; which he often manages very dully and without any taste: thereby rendering Christianity contemptible, and making himself also still more flat and indisposed for all honest employments. All which considered, I leave you to judge whether that man had not better have bestowed his time otherways; for then he might at the end of it have been good for something, whereas now he is good for nothing at all; but mopishly sits bewailing himself, and complaining of the deadness of his heart.

N. C. Ought not a man to be always thinking of heaven?

C. No: he may and ought sometime to think of other things. And he should do it without any scruple; not fearing that he is ill employed, when he doth not break God's commands.

N. C. He may be meanly employed.

C. That is, he is but a man; and not yet come to the degree of an angel.

N. C. But when others are recreating themselves, (as you call it,) ours are talking of heaven.

C. If it be their choice, and if they do not neglect any necessary business, nor censure others that do not as they do, I have nothing to say against them. But, as I told you, there are so many suchlike people in all religions, that you must not imagine this is a thing peculiar to yours. And if they think they offend God if they do otherwise, and if they condemn those that now and then innocently recreate themselves, and sigh over them as if they were[1] lost; they trouble the world and themselves, to say no worse, a great deal too much with their superstition.

N. C. You give liberty to your people even to go to see plays.

[1] ['were' om. ed. 6.]

C. Did you ever hear any of our ministers commend plays for a good divertisement to their people?

N. C. No; but they do not discommend them, and shew how unlawful it is to use such pastimes.

C. How should they, when they never yet saw it proved that they may not be lawfully used? But they preach against all undue and inordinate use of lawful pleasures; among which they number this for one. And in this business, they are as faithful as your ministers could be, were they in their places; and perhaps a great deal more discreet.

N. C. These discreet men have spoiled religion.

C. You should have said indiscreet men, for that is the truth, who declaim so violently against innocent things, that they are not at all regarded when they speak against things sinful. Their zeal is equal against things indifferent and things unlawful; and so the people easily imagine there is no more reason against the one than against the other[m]. Besides, they lay burdens upon men which are not necessary, and make Christ's yoke heavier than indeed it is; which is a great discouragement and hinderance to some, making them unwilling to submit themselves to him. And again, they entangle religious people in a world of scruples, which make their lives very uncomfortable.

N. C. Then your ministers, belike, allow your religious people to go to a play.

C. You have put a good word in my mouth; they do, I believe, allow it in due measure: encourage them to it they do not; but yet cannot say, if they be asked the question, that they sin if they do.

N. C. They might tell them they may be better employed.

C. What authority have they to pronounce that in general terms? Sometimes they may, and sometimes, perhaps, they may not. And beside this, if we be always bound to do that which is best, (which you suppose,) we can never tell whether we please God or no; but shall be engaged in endless doubts. For it is an hard matter sometime to discern which is best: and one thing may appear best, when I consider such and such things; and another will seem best, when I reflect upon other

[m] [On Sept. 2, 1642, an ordinance was passed for taking away stage-plays, and all similar light and frivolous amusements; and re-inforced by later enactments and penalties, Oct. 22, 1647, and Feb. 9, 164$\frac{7}{8}$.]

matters. And I may verily be persuaded, looking but at a few things, that this thing is best for me to do; which indeed is rather bad, and should not be done. As, I may conceive it best to wear no lace, no ribbons, no fine cloth or silk; but give all the money I spend in such things to the poor: whereas this may prove very pernicious, though it have a show of great piety; and maintain many poor in idleness that love not work; and spoil the labours and trade of many others who would not live idly. Further, how much time must we pass in resolving which is best in every action we do? As whether it be best to eat now, or stay a while longer; to drink this cup of wine which is offered me, or refuse it; to talk with a friend, or to part with him; to visit a neighbour, or to stay at home? And while we are deliberating in this fashion, the thing might be done which we had a mind unto; and we might be returned to that which possibly we thought would be best. It is sufficient, therefore, that we be well employed; and we ought not to torment ourselves, and mispend our time in fears lest we have not done the best. Let us but consider, whether no necessary duty toward God or man, that we are capable of, will be neglected when we go to divert ourselves; and then[n] we should not spoil our innocent delights with needless jealousies.

N. C. But surely this liberty you give will do people hurt; for they are apt to take too much of it.

C. Many will take it, whether we give it them or no. But I can assure you there are many excellent persons of extraordinary piety (whom I know) who will not take it, though we give it. Not that they think it an unlawful thing, as you do; but they have no use for that liberty. They are above such pleasures, and can find employment or ingenious divertisement that is far more sweet to them. I know others that scruple not the thing at all, and yet judge it not so expedient for them in their place and relation, and so wholly forbear it: which is a far greater virtue than that which you boast of; as much as it is more noble to abstain from those pleasures we think lawful, than to be restrained only from those which we think are sinful. I am acquainted with others also that go to plays, but very rarely, only for a harmless recreation when they are dull, or to accompany a friend that earnestly impor-

[n] ['when' ed. 6.]

tunes their company. And these, methinks, are as much above those whose piety you so much admire, as it is an harder thing to abstain from the pleasures of which we have tasted, and find to be very agreeable to us, than to forbear those to which we are strangers and know nothing of. Besides these, I know others that go oftener; and yet I dare not say they are not pious, because I see by all their actions that they love God and man. And I have heard them say, that the time they spend on that fashion doth not hinder them in any Christian duty that they know of, (and yet they are not negligent to inform themselves,) and is a great deal better spent than in talking against one's° neighbours, or hearing others rail upon the ill management of affairs, and find fault with the times, or suchlike things.

N. C. None of those things need be done neither.

C. It is true. But they want company, and they can find little of any sort where those things are not their entertainment. And it is very considerable that such people pass for godly among you, who spend many hours in talk of that nature now mentioned; and therefore we would fain know, why we may not with better reason call those godly that go to plays, and otherways are unreprovable. I say, with better reason; both because this is at least more innocent (if it be not perfectly blameless) than backbiting one's neighbours; and our godly do nothing but what they allow, whereas yours do that which they cannot but condemn. I am also of the opinion, that our ministers speak as often (if not more frequently) against the excessive use of that recreation, as yours do against all bitterness, wrath, anger, backbiting, and evil-speaking, which are altogether unlawful.

N. C. I did not think you would have justified these things so far as you do.

C. You need not have a worse opinion of me for that, because I do it not to justify myself. For I am one of those that never saw a play in my life, nor ever intend to see one. I could wish also there were not so many acted, because they invite men, perhaps, too often to them: and great care also ought to be taken that none be acted which tend to the corruption of manners. But tell me, I pray you, why one may

° ['our' ed. 6.]

not as well look upon a picture as upon the man himself whom it represents; or why a painter should be commended and a player condemned.

N. C. I understand you not.

C. A play doth but present men's actions before you as a picture doth their faces. And since you see such things done every day as they there represent, why may you not see both the things and the representation of them, if you have a mind? Nay, tell me why they that do should not be thought to spend their time as well as you, that can hear long stories of the bishops, or of such and such a parson, (as you in scorn, though very foolishly, call our ministers; for some of them are but vicars, and you yourselves would be glad to hold a good parsonage, as many laymen do,) or of some of your neighbours, whose life and (perhaps) domestic and private affairs you having pried into can be talking of half a day together. This is, in truth, no better than hearing of a play, only you do not see it. That is, you hear the same things that others both hear and see acted in a play, and there is a great deal of art and wit and fancy, and you have none.

N. C. I think our time ought not to be spent in either of these, as I told you before.

C. I am well content it should be so. But let our people be as godly as yours (if this be all you have to say against them), since you confess they do both alike, or are not much different. Do not cast them out of the house of God merely because they go to a play-house: but hope that though you are gilt more gloriously, yet they may be as good metal as you. And therefore let them stand upon God's cupboard no less than yourselves.

N. C. How come you to talk thus metaphorically, and indeed obscurely? For though I guess at your meaning, yet it is not so plain as you pretend to speak.

C. A great deal plainer than W. B. speaks; who, in one of the Ten Sermons I told you of, informs us that God is departed from the nation, but will return again, because he hath left a great cupboard of plate behind him. "Believe it, Christians," says he, "God hath a very great cupboard of plate in this nation; Christ hath much plate in England, as much as in any nation in the world, and he will not lose his

plate[n]." But he will not tell us how he is gone, nor when he went, nor what drove him away, nor what his return will be; no, nor what mark there is upon the plate whereby we may know it. And, I doubt, you would not be well pleased, if I should go about to guess what he means by all this.

N. C. Nothing but what is good, you may be sure.

C. Let the king look to that, and get it expounded; for I believe he is concerned to know whether the time when God went away was not when he came into England last; and so whether he must not be gone and packed away when God returns again to you.

N. C. I do not like this discourse.

C. Do you mean of mine, or of his?

N. C. Of neither.

C. It's well you do not approve of his; but why you should dislike mine, I know not: for if you yourself was a king, you would look upon them as dangerous people who should suppose God had forsaken your kingdom since you came to it.

N. C. He means, perhaps, no more but that God hath deserted them who are his people, and once enjoyed more liberty than now they do.

C. You cannot excuse him so, for the title of his sermon tells you that it relates either to a soul or to a nation. And in the body of the discourse, (if it deserve that name,) he often applies it to this nation, saying, "What shall we do that God may return to this nation[o]?"

N. C. He would not have you think that he is quite gone, for he only saith, "God is much departed, and gone in great measure."

C. True: but his meaning is plainly this, that he would be quite gone, but that he and suchlike are here. Were but they removed, God would have no dwelling among us. It is they that lay hold on him, and will not let him totally depart. They are his plate, and as long as that remains, he hath something to engage his affections, and so will not perfectly abandon the nation. But for all that, he complains sometimes, as if the Lord had abhorred and cast us off, telling us, that "Christ is

[n] [Serm. ix. on the Covenant, Works, vol. iii. p. 172.]
[o] [Ibid. p. 173.]

offended, his gospel-institutions trampled on;" and, that "it is not an easy thing to bring him back." And it is very likely, if he had thought of it, he would have told you, that the plate upon the cupboard is thrown down, the plate is battered and bruised, the plate is abused and soiled. For he tells his congregation, "You are in a suffering day[p]."

N. C. What if he had said so?

C. Then, to make the play complete, one need only have added this, that the plate must be at least well scoured, if not a little beaten.

N. C. That is, you would have us persecuted.

C. Not I: but since you fancy you are persecuted, when you are not, it would not be amiss if your folly were a little chastised, in order to make you thankful for the liberty which even by law you enjoy.

N. C. To me your words are as bad as a persecution, which compare good sermons to a play.

C. Why! that sermon hath more of fiction in it than many of the plays: for they are sometimes grounded upon an historical truth; but he entertained the people in his theatre with a pleasant piece of his own pure invention; telling a story of God's departure, and of his coming back again, and their excelling other men as much as a cupboard of plate doth common furniture, and of their remaining here as a pledge of his return; whenas there is no such thing, but only in his and their fancy. Only one thing, I observe, he very wisely conceals, lest it should happen to prove, in their conceit, a plain tragedy. For having said, in order to assure them of God's return, that "if a man have left plate and jewels in his house, he will either come back to them, or send for them away to him[q];" this pleasant gentleman, supposing his hearers (together with his truth and worship, i. e. their opinions and way of serving God) to be the plate, would not disturb their fancies by telling them, that according to the state of that resemblance, God will either return to them, or send for them to him; but tells them absolutely, he will return again to them. Read his words: "Such plate the Lord hath much of here,

[p] [Serm. ix. on the Covenant, Works, vol. iii. p. 174.]
[q] [Ibid. p. 172.]

and he will not lose his plate; therefore he will return again; though he may afflict, and afflict sorely, yet he will return again." And a little after: "As sure as the morning is after the night, so sure will God return. His going forth is prepared as the morning: as certain he will return as the morning doth[r]." This, I must needs say, was kindly said, and like a poet, who can invent what he pleases, and leave out what makes not for his turn.

N. C. Methinks you invent what you please. And since you are so good at it, I pray, let me know what invention you have to excuse your plays, which have so much obscenity in them.

C. It is more than I know, if they have any at all. And, should there be any, assure yourself the ears of those whom we esteem godly are no less chaste than yours, and would not endure it. But did you ever hear that any of our ministers spoke things so nearly approaching to immodesty as W. B. doth?

N. C. I shall stop my ears if you offer to rake into such matters.

C. I did not intend it, were you never so willing to hear it. I would only have you know, that if I should present you with all the filthy expressions and allusions that I have met withal in such books as his, I should make you repent that ever you led me to this discourse.

N. C. I cannot conceive that they should fall into such errors, since they are the strictest sort of men, as you very well know, and love to preach very plainly.

C. Now I understand what you mean by plain preaching, (which you so much talk of,) viz. to use rude and broad expressions. As when W. B. saith, "A little estate is but a mess of pottage; and a great estate, a great bowl of pottage." Have I not hit your meaning?

N. C. No.

C. Then it is very hard to know what it is. And indeed, the assembly of divines, when they direct men how to perform their ministry, and, among other things, tell them they must preach plainly, do not speak plainly themselves in their Direc-

[r] [Serm. ix. on the Covenant, Works, vol. iii. p. 176.]

tory, i. e. not so as to be understood: for these are their words, p. 17[s]: "The servant of Christ is to perform his whole ministry, . . . plainly, that the meanest may understand; delivering the truth, *not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*" Now, since you acknowledge they cannot prophesy, nor speak with tongues, nor demonstrate their doctrine by miracles, as the apostles did, I would gladly know what they mean by *the demonstration of the Spirit and of power*. I am apt to think it would puzzle a new assembly to tell us, in plain words, what they intended by that phrase.

N. C. If you were taught of God, as they are, you would easily know.

C. We are all taught of God by the apostles, who have revealed his mind to us, and that in a divine manner. And therefore, by pretending you are taught of God more than we, when you cannot prove it, you only show that you are taught to cant in Scripture phrase. Pray, let us see if you understand any better another direction of theirs, which is, to preach painfully, not doing the work of the Lord negligently. Whom do you account a painful preacher?

N. C. One that takes a great deal of pains.

C. It is just as plain as it was before, and you give me a very good demonstration how well you are bred to a clear and plain understanding of things. But that which you mean, I believe, is one who preaches often.

N. C. Yes.

C. That is the way to do the work of the Lord negligently, as common experience hath taught us.

N. C. Not if they take pains to consider what they say.

C. But you would see them so often in the pulpit, that you do not allow them time for that and other ministerial duties. Hence it is, that upon all occasions they apply the holy Scriptures very impertinently, and interpret them negligently, and allege that for a proof which is nothing to the purpose, nay, quite contrary to that which they maintain. Witness W. B.,

[s] [See the Directory, p. 34. of the edition published in 164$\frac{4}{5}$ by an ordinance of March 13 of that year.]

who, from that place in Hosea vi. 3, *His going forth is prepared as the morning,* would have his people believe that God will as certainly return to them as the morning is after the night. Whereas that is only spoken to the ten tribes, and the prophet doth not give them an absolute assurance that they shall return to their own land; but only invites them to repentance, and on that condition promiseth, *God in a little time will revive them.* Nay, he requires not only that they should "begin *to know God,*" whom they had forsaken, but that they should "continue and persevere to know him;" and then, saith he, *his going forth is prepared as the morning:* i. e. he was ready to comfort them, as the morning light doth those that wait for it; "*and would come upon them as the rain,* which quickens and calls back the corn to life, which otherwise would have lain dead in the earth." It is true, W. B. saith a little before, "If you desire God should return to you, return you to him;" as if there were some condition in the business. But this is only his usual way of saying and unsaying; of granting promises to be conditional, which he would have his people believe shall be performed absolutely. And indeed so much he had told them before this, that they might not be discomforted, though they did not return to God. "Friends," saith he, (p. 478[t],) "there is a time when God will deliver his people for his name's sake, and with a notwithstanding;" i. e. notwithstanding all their sins, and notwithstanding all his displeasure, as he explains himself. Now if you would know when that time is, he tells us, "when a people suffer for God's name's sake; then God will deliver for his name's sake, then God will deliver with a notwithstanding." And this he would have them believe is their present state and condition. "How is it with you now? (they are his words:) you are in a suffering day; but are not all your sufferings for the name of Christ? Be of good comfort, then, though God may be departed and your city destroyed, yet he is not quite gone, but will return again[u]:" that is, notwithstanding all their sins, he would not leave them. Do you not see how confident he is? This it is for men to fancy themselves "at the Father's knee, and to be in his arms, and held in his embraces, held in his

[t] [Bridge's works, vol. iii. p. 176.]

[u] [Ibid. p. 174.]

smiles," (as he speaks, p. 469[x]). They say even what they please when they are full of this conceit, and think it is the oracles of God. They tell you their own mind, and believe it is the mind of the Lord. And when they tell it you in such delicate expressions as these, or such rude and gross ones as those before mentioned, you call it plain preaching and powerful preaching.

N. C. The assembly told you (if you would have observed) what plain preaching is, in that very place which you quoted; where they require ministers to forbear unprofitable use of unknown tongues, strange phrases, cadences of sounds and words, and to cite sentences out of writers sparingly, though never so elegant.

C. By your favour, this is only one part of that which they call plain preaching. For first, they say, a minister must preach in the *demonstration of the Spirit, and of power:* and then it follows, "abstaining also from an unprofitable use," &c. So that still we are to seek what that preaching with power means. And as for this sort of plain preaching now mentioned, either your ministers do not understand it, or do not mind it. For who hath more strange phrases than W. B.? or, (to pass by him, who, it is like, regards not the Directory,) who is there that stuffs his sermons with more shreds of authors, and more affects little sayings and cadences of sounds and words, than T. W.? As for his *power* in preaching, I showed you before how unable it is to rouse and shake an hypocrite, and bring him to repentance. For he studies rather to please him *with the enticing words of man's wisdom*, (though after a poor fashion,) than to make a plain representation of his wretched state and condition to him. If many of those whom you despise had had the handling of him, they would have turned his inside outward, and set it before his eyes: they would have ripped his very heart and discovered his entrails, that he might have beheld how he stands divided between God and the world. He should have seen how many secret sins he suffers to lurk in his breast: nay, in what a detestable manner he reserves a kindness for many of the vilest sins; such as are covetousness, oppression, hard dealing,

[x] [Ibid. p. 167.]

unmercifulness, malice, revenge, bitterness, wrath, implacableness, and such like; which are the sins of too many religious people, that is, of hypocrites, that are not entire and uniform in their religion. For an hypocrite is not a mere player in religion, as T. W. fancies; but one that concerns himself with a mighty zeal for some good things, and perhaps would rather die than not do them, but hath no affection for the rest of Christ's commands. He doth not only put on a garb of piety to deceive others, but there are a number of men that love some part of piety, and by that means deceive their own souls. And let you and I, my good neighbour, look to it that we be not of that number.

N. C. Our ministers, you may well think, give us such cautions. For you must acknowledge, as I intimated before, (but you would pass it by,) that they are the strictest people in the world, and teach us so to be.

C. So were the Pharisees: for that sect was more curious and exact in many things than any of the rest. But these two things among many others you shall observe of them. First, that they were very desirous of the people's favour and esteem: the desire of pleasing whom, I doubt, sometimes betrays your preachers into such rude and unhandsome speeches as I have heard and seen from them. And secondly, the best of them (as appears in St. Paul) were carried with a blind preposterous zeal, even against the truth of Christ; which arose from their high esteem of themselves, and a confidence they were very dear to God above all others. I wish the like heat and conceit of your infallible spirit do not now make you violently oppose many things which have Christ's stamp upon them. And then you had best examine whether you are not strict people, just as they are plain preachers.

N. C. Your meaning?

C. I mean, not strict. For as to me those are very obscure speakers, and hard to be understood, whom you call plain; so it is possible those may take too much liberty, especially in their tongues, whom you call strict.

N. C. Oh, sir, there are no people so serious as they.

C. If you mean that they look solemnly, and will not laugh nor be merry, it is like it is true of some of them. But whether this be the effect of their religion, or their natural temper,

it is no great matter, for it doth not much commend them. Otherwise, if you mean that they long consider things, and come not to a resolution till it be late, that they ponder all their words and actions, and weigh well what they are going about, I doubt you will find but few of these serious persons; for to me, the zeal of most of you seems to make you heady and rash. I have observed, for instance, that they are apt presently to condemn those that are merry, or at least to shake their heads, and express their fears as if they were too vain and light-spirited. This censure hath a show of seriousness, but in truth proceeds from a want of it. But if you mean that they are in good earnest in their religion, so are many of the nuns and friars, and other devout people among the papists, who seriously say their Ave Maries and Pater Nosters, and would not omit them for all the world. And so were the Pharisees a very serious people, especially upon a Sabbath, and would not neglect their devotions (in which they were earnest and long) for any good. And assure yourself, a man may be serious in religion and yet be an hypocrite: that is, he may in good earnest do many duties, and love to pray, and hear and repeat sermons, and the like; and all the while he may in as good earnest love the world very much, and (to say no more) love the praise of men, and desire to be better thought of than his neighbours. In short, he may love money and esteem, being covetous and censorious as the Pharisees were.

N. C. You love to compare us with the Pharisees. Were they such a tender conscienced people?

C. Yes, indeed they were, in many things. They would rather die than break the Sabbath: they made a great scruple of walking above so many paces upon that day, and had infinite ceremonies and superstitions about its observation, of which they were so tender, that they could not endure anybody else should break them. The like tenderness they had about idolatry and many other things. But yet they made no bones (as we say) of a widow's house, which they could devour at one bit, as soon as the Sabbath was done. They were horribly covetous and desirous of riches. They made no conscience of oppression and extortion: they were monstrously uncharitable and proud: they thought themselves the wisest and the best men in the world, and despised all others as men that knew

not what religion meant. And lest you should think they wanted zeal to increase their party, (which they called love to pure religion,) *they compassed sea and land* (as Christ tells you) *to make a proselyte*, who, when he was gained, *became twofold more the child of hell than themselves.* Which thing I would have you observe, because it shows us that men may be converted from gross profaneness to sins of a more spiritual and invisible nature, to diabolical pride, and malice, and rage against all that oppose their sect. And therefore you would do well to consider again, whether there be not many such converts now, that hate us as much as they do Common Prayer, and are zealous for little else but to make men non-conformists, and to disgrace those that are not.

N. C. I did not think you would have pleaded so hard for all the superstitions and superstitious people of your church. And, to tell you all my mind, I should love your minister better, if he did not seem to love the Common Prayer so well. For he reads it with as much devotion as he expresses in his own prayers; and besides, he maintains the use of it and the things appointed by it (as you do) in his private discourses.

C. In my mind, you ought to like him the better for this, because he is not an hypocrite, and doeth not that to get a living which he inwardly dislikes, nor approves that by public practice which he disallows or discommends in private talk. And methinks it argues too much insincerity in yourselves, that you could be content, nay, glad, that another man should do contrary to his conscience and profession, either in using those prayers which he inwardly disaffects, or in speaking against them (at least silently hearing them reproached) when he is convinced of their goodness. Above all, I wonder how any honest-hearted man can endure him that mutters over the public prayers (which he pretends by his use of them to like) without any spirit or life, on purpose to disgrace them and bring them into contempt, at least to make his own prayers better accepted and preferred before them.

N. C. Well, but what need he justify and maintain the use of the Common Prayer wherever he hears it disputed of?

C. He thereby doth but justify himself and his own practice. It seems you would have him stand like a fool with his finger in his mouth, merely to humour you. And withal, you would

fain have it thought that all conscientious men are of your mind, if they had heart and courage to profess it.

N. C. Well, neighbour, I think we had best leave off this trade of talking one against the other, and finding out one another's faults, which I see is the business both of you and us.

C. To say the truth, it would be more for the interest of Christianity if we did. But though you seem very desirous, in a good mood, that we should cease to undermine each the other, and both join together to promote sound religion and true piety; yet this fit holds not long. For commonly you labour nothing more than to overthrow the religion established; nay, many of you glory in your hopes of this: as if it were a mighty matter to pull down a building, and bring things to ruin; which is the easiest thing in the world, the work of ignorance and confidence, and, as one of our ministers said, "the pastime of the devil, and the employment of his children;" of whom we may speak in the apostle's words, Rom. ii. 16. *Destruction and misery are in their ways, the way of peace have they not known.* In order to this, you disgrace the bishops; undervalue, if not despise all our ministers; revile the Common Prayer; accuse us of superstition, popery, and anti-christianism, and what not[y]. You every where divulge and spread abroad the faults of any of the clergy: and rejoice to hear or tell a story of any drunken parson, as you are wont to call the best of them by way of derision. Nay, you have more favour and kindness for wild and fanatic people, who undermine the very foundation of religion, than for us.

N. C. No more of this, I pray you.

C. I should rather say to you, Let us hear no more of this: and I shall rejoice and be ready to correspond with you in all offices of love and kindness.

N. C. Belike, you can love one of our way.

C. Yes, very heartily. And therefore I would not have you

[y] ["Nor must the ceremonies alone suffer, but the reverend bishops too, by others of the same gang, as Throgmorton, Penry, Fenner, Udal, and such like bravados, calling them antichristian, petty-popes, bishops of the devil, cogging and cozening knaves, dumb dogs, enemies of God," &c.–Foulis, p. 59; Heylin, Exam. Hist. part i. p. 157; Gauden's Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ suspiria, pp. 67, 245; and see above, p. 379.]

expound any thing I have said, as if it were meant against the humble, the modest, the charitable, and such as are afflicted and mourn for our present differences: but as intended to check the pride and presumption of many among you, who, though full of folly, think they know the mind of God more than all the bishops and priests in the world; and, by their confidence and bold pretence of the Spirit, would overbear all sober reason, and impose all their fond opinions on us; making the poor people believe that they are God's only favourites, and fit to teach and rule the whole nation. These we cannot well suffer to strut as they do, and not endeavour to display their vanity: nor can we approve of those who for the sake of their party are content to dissemble it, if not favour their impudent pretences. For we know well enough how like they are in many things to St. Paul's formal Christians; especially in this one part of their character, that they are *despisers of those that are good.* A thing I would by no means be guilty of, and therefore hope you will not suspect my esteem of you.

N. C. I am glad you are so charitably disposed; and am the more pleased, because I thought you had looked upon us with the greatest detestation in the world.

C. I have already told you that we do not think you all of a kind, though now you flock together. There are some (of your ministers for instance) who I believe are of an humble spirit, quiet and peaceable in the land, desiring unity and accord, grieving for the breach of it; and are so far from condemning those that are satisfied to do what the law requires, that they are sorry they cannot contribute to the common peace by doing the same. Upon which account they go as far as they can; and conform to public order in all things wherein they are satisfied; and are tender of breaking any laws: and when they cannot obey them, do not rail upon them and their makers, but silently and without any noise omit to do what they enjoin. These we cannot but love; and are sorry that in so great a number we can find so few of this good temper. For there is a second sort, (with which the kingdom swarms,) who are of an haughty humour, of a furious and factious disposition, puffed up with a conceit of their gifts to such a height, that they will scarce allow any man to know any thing of God who is not of their party. Sour and crabbed they are above

all other men, cross and peevish beyond all expression: they never speak well of our governors or government; they are always reviling bishops and common prayer, and talking like men inspired; it is an easy matter for them to disparage all our ministry, and beget an ill opinion of them in the minds of their credulous followers. Which we conceiving to be their business, no wonder if our men seek to preserve themselves, not by disgracing, but by rightly representing them to the world. They ought not to betray the church wherein they live, by a base and unworthy silence. Even the meanest child of us ought to speak, when you are about to kill our mother. Your long nails wherewith you now scratch her face must be shown the people; who see them not while they behold your hands lifted up to heaven. But besides these two, there is a third sort between both, who are dissatisfied only with a few things; allow our ministers to be good men, and wish for peace, but yet for private respects hold fair correspondence with the furies now named; keep up the separation; hold conventicles; suffer the people, without reproof, to be fierce and violent against us; connive at a great many of their false and absurd opinions; let them alone in their rude and insolent behaviour; take not sufficient care to instruct them in the truth, to bring them to a modest and peaceable temper; in short, to qualify them for compliance with us. Do not smile at the word, for I can demonstrate, it might soon be brought about if they pleased.

N. C. How, I pray? Can you do more than all the men in the kingdom?

C. Let them persuade their people but to be of their mind, and the business is done.

N. C. Do you think they do not?

C. No, I warrant you. If they did, the people would conform, though they cannot. For that which keeps this sort of ministers from conforming is not any thing to which the people are bound, but something particularly required of them.

N. C. You have revealed a secret to me.

C. It is easy for anybody to find out, that hath a mind to it: there being nothing plainer than this, that they would have read those prayers which I would have you hear, if something else had not been in the way, which you are not concerned in;

and that is, renouncing the Covenant[z]. Let them then but persuade you to do all that they can do themselves, and in order to that give you reasons why it should be done; and

[z] [The Declaration enjoined by the Act of Uniformity to be subscribed before the feast of St. Bartholomew, Aug. 24, 1662, "by every dean, canon, and prebendary: all masters, heads, fellows, chaplains, and tutors, in any college, hall, house of learning, or hospital: all public professors, readers in either university, and in every college and elsewhere: and all parsons, vicars, curates and lecturers; and every schoolmaster keeping any public or private school; and every person instructing youth in any private family," is as follows:—

"I, A. B. do declare that it is not lawful upon any pretence whatsoever to take arms against the king: and that I do abhor that traitorous position of taking arms by his authority, against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him; and that I will conform to the Liturgy of the Church of England, as it is now by law established. And I do hold that there lies no obligation upon me, or any other person, from the oath commonly called the Solemn League and Covenant, to endeavour any change or alteration of government, either in church or state; and that the same was in itself an unlawful oath, and imposed upon the subjects of this realm against the known laws and liberties of this kingdom."

This Declaration was to be subscribed by the persons above mentioned, before the archbishop, bishop, or ordinary of the diocese, on pain of deprivation for those who were possessed of livings, and for schoolmasters, or tutors, three months' imprisonment for the first offence, and for every other offence, three months' imprisonment, and the forfeiture of five pounds to his Majesty. However, after the 25th of May 1682 the renouncing of the Solemn League and Covenant was to be omitted.—14 Car. II. c. 4.

"This abjuring the Covenant was reckoned a very great hardship by the generality of the ministers who were ejected in 1662. This kept several from conformity who complied after 1682, when they were no longer obliged to it."—Calamy's Abridgment of Baxter's Life, p. 258.

"The renouncing the Covenant was the greatest objection to the conformity of the presbyterians, especially to those who had pressed the taking of it, and cried it up for the sovereign balsam of the times, and made the obligation of it the common subject of their sermons, though they confessed their wilful breaking long before this legal renouncing of it. As Mr. Calamy in his famous fast sermon upon Christmas day, 1644.—'Consider,' saith he, 'the late national Covenant you have taken, wherein you have lifted up your hands to the most high God, and have sworn to study unity and conformity in religion, and to endeavour according to your places to extirpate heresy, schism, &c. I know not how it is come to pass, but sure I am our divisions are greater since we took this Covenant than before. And sure I am that God will call us to a strict account for this grievous sin of perjury. And if ever England perish by these wars, this shall be England's motto, Here lieth a nation that hath broken covenant with God, and therefore is this great evil come upon her.'"—Kennet, Register, p. 743.]

then I may hope to see you and I go to the same church together: and for them that do not stand upon the Covenant, (for there are some such,) they have the greater reason to exhort you to come, nay, to come themselves, and bring you along with them. But lest they should not do their duty, give me leave to speak to you in those very words which they have writ to others; and, if you think they have now any weight in them, (as I believe you once thought they had,) we shall not be long separated.

N. C. What have they writ?

C. In a book called "A Vindication of the Presbyterial Government," &c.[a], you will find a speech of your ministers and elders in the province of London, to those that had left their communion, and stood in divided congregations from them; which, if it had any force then in your opinion, ought to prevail with you now to come and join yourself again to us whom you have forsaken. I will cite you some passages of it in their own words: and let me begin with those which you find, p. 130, in a distinct character, (as the strength, I suppose, of what they had to say:) "If we be a church of Christ[b], and Christ hold communion with us, why do you separate from us? If we be the body of Christ, do not they that separate from the body separate from the head also? We are loath to speak any thing that may offend you, yet we entreat you to consider, that if the apostle call those divisions of the church of Corinth (wherein Christians did not separate into divers formed congregations of several communion, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper) *schisms*, 1 Cor. i. 10, may not your secession from us, and professing you cannot join with us as members, and setting up congregations of another communion, be more properly called schism?" Thus they pleaded for unity and uniformity in those days, (1649,) and we say the very same now. Be just, I beseech you, and either pronounce that they had no reason on their side when they wrote those words, or that we have reason too, who use the same to you. Hear also what they say a little after, and think one of us speaks it to you. "You gather churches out of our churches, and you set up

[a] [See p. 316. above.]

[b] ['the church of Christ' in the original treatise.]

churches in an opposite way to our churches; and all this you do voluntarily and unwarrantably, not having any sufficient cause for it. For you acknowledge us to be the true churches of Jesus Christ, and churches with which Christ holds communion[c]." This I dare say is the judgment of every true presbyterian, that the church of England is a true member of Christ's body, and that Christ holds communion with her, and hath not cut her off (because of any ceremonies she uses) from him the Head of the church. If so, consider, I beseech you, as they entreat their brethren of the separation, how dare you refuse to hold communion with those whom Christ Jesus holds communion withal? How can you with a safe conscience thus separate yourselves from those who are not separated from Christ? Is it nothing to make a schism in his body? Do you not rend yourselves from him, when you thus rend yourselves from it? Think seriously on it before you sleep, that you may at least, in purpose and resolution, presently unite yourself to us, from whom you have departed.

N. C. But I am told that every separation is not a schism.

C. To this they answer in that book, and pray mind it; "The godly learned say, that every unjust and rash separation from a true church (that is, when there is no just, or at least no sufficient cause of the separation) is a schism: and that there is a negative and a positive schism. The former is, when men do peaceably and quietly draw from communion with a church, not making a head against that church from which they are departed: the other is, when persons so withdrawing do consociate and withdraw themselves into a distinct and opposite body, setting up a church against a church, (which, let me tell you by the way, is your case, my good neighbour,) which Camero calls a schism by way of eminency[d]; and further tells us, there are four causes that make a separation from a church lawful. First, when they that separate are grievously and intolerably persecuted: secondly, when the church they separate from is heretical: thirdly, when it is idolatrous: fourthly, when it is the seat of antichrist. And, where none of these four are found, there the separation is insufficient, and

[c] [P. 131.]

[d] [De Schismate. The treatise forms part of Cameron's Prælectiones de Ecclesia, p. 322 of the collected edition of his works, fol. Franc. 1642.]

schism. Now we are fully assured that none of these four causes can be justly charged upon our congregations; therefore you must not be displeased with us, but with yourselves, if we blame you as guilty of positive schism[e]." What say you now, my neighbour? Was this good doctrine then, or no? If it was, it is so still, and I beseech you make good use of it.

N. C. Some think it is a sufficient cause to separate, in that there are such sinful mixtures tolerated among you, and that your congregations are miscellaneous companies of all gatherings, and all sorts are admitted even to sacramental communion.

C. That is the very objection which your ministers and elders saw framed against them by the separatists. And what they answer to them we return to you. First, that this charge is not true; the rule of the church of England being as full and strict for church-members that shall come to communion as that of the assembly there cited, p. 133, which is this: "that they must be visible saints, such as being of age do profess faith in Christ, and obedience to Christ, according to the rules of faith and life taught by Christ and his apostles." Secondly, "suppose there were some sinful mixtures (say they) at our sacrament, yet we conceive this is not a sufficient ground of a negative, much less of a positive separation. The learned author forementioned tells us, that corruption in manners crept into a church is not a sufficient cause of separation from it. This he proves from Matt. xxiii. 2, 3, and he adds also this reason for it[f]; because, in what church soever there is purity of doctrine, there God hath his church, though overwhelmed with scandals. And, therefore, whosoever separates from such an assembly separates from the place where God hath his church, which is rash and unwarrantable. The church of Corinth had such a profane mixture at their sacrament, as we believe few (if any) of our congregations can be charged withal; and yet the apostle doth not persuade the godly party to separate, much less to gather a church out of a church."

N. C. What do you tell me of the doctrine of a foreign divine?

C. They have made it theirs by approving what he says, in their book. And besides, they tell you "there were many

[e] [Ibid.] [f] [Cameron, p. 324.]

godly and learned non-conformists of the last age, that were persuaded in their conscience they could not hold communion with the church of England in receiving the sacrament kneeling, without sin; yet they did not separate from her: indeed, in that particular act they withdrew, but yet so as that they held communion with her in the rest, being far from a negative, much more from a positive separation from her. Nay, some of them (mind the words) even then, when our churches were full of sinful mixtures, with great zeal and learning defended them so far as to write against those that did separate from them." Who these good and learned men were they tell you in the margin; Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Dod, Mr. Hildersham, Mr. Bradshaw, Mr. Ball.

N. C. Then we shall communicate with men in their sins, and we must not be led to that by the greatest examples.

C. To prevent that, they will advise you, that if any brother offend you, you are not to separate from him, (for this is not the way to gain but to destroy his soul,) but to tell him of it privately, and in an orderly way to bring it to the church. "And when you have done your duty, you have freed your soul, and may safely and comfortably communicate in that church without sin[g]."

N. C. I perceive you are read in our writers: and truly, you have now told me so much from them, that I shall not have so hard an opinion of you as I had before. And, I hope, this will preserve me from being guilty of the sin of schism, because the nature of that consists in an open breach of Christian love.

C. This will not serve your turn, but you must come and join in communion with us again. For they tell you, that "as he who denies a fundamental article of the faith is guilty of heresy, though he add not obstinacy thereto to make him an heretic; so he that doth unwarrantably separate from the true church is truly guilty of schism, though he add not uncharitableness thereunto to denominate him a complete schismatic." You may read the words, if you will, p. 137. And afterward they tell you, that to make a rupture in the body of Christ, and to divide church from church, and to set up church against church, and to gather churches out of true churches, and

[g] [P. 136.]

because we differ in some things, therefore to hold church-communion in nothing; this we think hath no warrant out of the word of God, and will introduce all manner of confusion in churches and families, and not only disturb, but in a little time destroy the power of godliness, purity of religion, peace of Christians, and set open a wide gap to bring in atheism, popery, heresy, and all manner of wickedness[h]. Thus they: and how fast all this is a-doing by your means, who now will have no communion with us in any thing, because we differ in some things, is apparent to all the world. For the love of God, and of the church, nay, of your own families, consider of it in time, and repent; that so they may not be brought to utter confusion, but the gap may be stopped which you have opened too wide already, to atheism, irreligion, and all the rest of the wickedness which comes pouring in itself upon us. Do not continue that separation any longer which you have rashly begun, lest you be found guilty of that very thing yourselves which you condemned so much in others, and profess "is by all good men to be abhorred[i]." Read what I have now said over and over again, and seriously lay it to heart; lest your own books be opened at the day of judgment, and sentence be pronounced against you out of them. Nay, desire your ministers to read it, and to expound the reason to you, why they should separate now more than Mr. Dod, Mr. Hildersham, Mr. Ball, and such like, did heretofore. Entreat them to let you know how they excuse themselves from the guilt, not only of withdrawing themselves from our communion, (which they call "negative schism[k],") but also of making a head against us, and drawing themselves into a distinct and opposite body, and setting up a church which they call "positive, and schism by way of eminency." Ask them, which of the four causes of separation they allege to make their departure from us necessary; what we have done that should make it unlawful for them to communicate with us; or rather, how we have separated ourselves from Jesus Christ, and made him disown us. If they be not able to give you very good satisfaction in this, and in all the rest, I hope you see what you are to do, according to their own advice and counsel.

[h] P.140. [i] [Ibid.] [k] [Adopted from Cameron, p. 325.]

N. C. I suppose they will say that they are persecuted, which will justify their separation.

C. I cannot imagine what they should pretend, unless it be this. But bid them show you what hath befallen them that should deserve that name. And likewise show that the persecution is grievous, nay, intolerable, (for else they have told you it will not warrant a separation :) and one thing more desire to learn of them, which is, whether those things that any of them have suffered be not the effect and punishment of their separation, and not the cause of it. As for any restraints the law hath laid upon their liberty, they are nothing comparable to those that were laid on us when they were in power: and yet they will take it ill if they should be called persecutors. For if you look into an ordinance of parliament of August 11. 1645, for putting in execution the Directory, you will find these words: "That if any person or persons whatsoever shall, at any time or times hereafter, use, or cause the aforesaid Book of Common Prayer to be used in any church, chapel, or public place of worship, or in any private place or family, within the kingdom of England, or the dominion of Wales, or port and town of Berwick; every such person so offending therein shall for the first offence pay the sum of five pounds of lawful English money; for the second offence, ten pounds; and for the third, shall suffer one whole year's imprisonment, without bail or mainprise[1]." Can you name me any law now extant so severe and cruel as this was? Do we abridge the poorest tradesman so much of his liberty as then they would have abridged all the nobles in the land, nay, (for any thing I see,) the king himself, at least his family, which were forbid the use of Common Prayer under such great penalties? Are you not all allowed to worship God just as you please yourselves in your own families? Nay, may not some of your neighbours join with you, if you and they be so minded? For shame do not complain of persecution, when you are so kindly used, who endeavoured in such a manner to oppress others. And blush to think that you should separate on this account; which yet is all that you can have the face to pretend, to excuse the schism you have made.

[1] [Husband's Collection of Ordinances, p. 715. Rushworth dates it Aug. 23.—Vol. vi. p. 205.]

The Common Prayer, you see, was never imposed with such rigour as your Directory was. And whereas you now take what liberty you list to preach, and write, and print what you think good against the Common Prayer; it was then ordained, that none should do so "against the Directory, or any thing contained therein," (which is a great deal more;) and in case any man was so bold, he was to "forfeit such a sum of money as should be thought fit to be imposed on him by those before whom he had his trial; provided it was not less than five pounds, nor more than fifty[m]." Who should try him, nobody knew; but he was sure to meet with little favour if the Directory men met with him, and were to handle him; who would tolerate no dissenters from them. And their reason is given (in the London ministers' letter to the assembly), because they were bound by the Covenant to extirpate all schism; and to endeavour the Lord should be one, and his name one, in the three kingdoms, i. e. that all should subscribe to the Directory.

N. C. Sure, sir, you wrong them; we always took a great care of tender consciences.

C. I have demonstrated the contrary; unless you think all men's hearts to be hardened but your own. And for your fuller satisfaction, read Mr. Gillespie's Miscellany Questions, chap. xvi.[n], where he gives eleven reasons why there ought to be an ordinance of parliament for the taking of the Covenant by all persons in the kingdom, under "a considerable penalty." And endeavours to prove this ought to be done, though there be some things in the Covenant disputable; "wherein good and learned men differ in their opinions, as about prelacy[o]:" and notwithstanding the objection of tender consciences, who ought not to be forced. Which he answers thus: that the parliament had already imposed the Directory of Worship under certain mulcts and penalties, &c. And that it is no tyranny over men's consciences to punish a great and scandalous sin, (such as the refusing and opposing of the Covenant, or a dividing from it,) although the offender in his conscience believe it to be no sin, yea, peradventure believe it to be a duty.

[m] [Husband, p. 716.] [n] [P. 203. See page 386 above.] [o] [P. 208.]

By this you see how far you were from leaving men's consciences at liberty, even in things wherein you acknowledge good and learned men differ. And there is another thing which to me seems something hard, (I am sure you ought to judge it so,) viz. an ordinance of June 2, 1646[p], requiring that "all people who were come to reside in the parliament-quarters should take the National League and Covenant, and the Negative Oath, notwithstanding any articles that had been made by the soldiery." Why should you complain of the late Oxford act, (as it is commonly called,) who could endure heretofore that men should be used so severely? Compare that and this ordinance together, and tell me which of them is most moderate; that which banished men out of many counties, or that which only prohibits their near habitation to a town or two? that which made void the promises which their own officers had made, or that which was against no engagements at all? I wish you would consider these things, with a great many more of like nature; for, though your prejudices are strong, I hope sometime they may serve to convince you. And the mention of the Covenant just now brings a considerable thing to my mind; which, if it would not be tedious, I would willingly propound, and desire you to inquire about it.

N. C. I pray, say on, for your discourse begins to be pleasant to me.

C. I wish you would ask your ministers, why they themselves heretofore not only approved of certain ceremonies in the worship of God, but also were well pleased they should be enjoined; and yet now cry out upon our ceremonies; or at least, would have them left at liberty.

N. C. What ceremonies and worship do you mean?

C. Was not the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant a piece of religion?

N. C. Yes; it was an oath.

C. Read then an ordinance of Febr. 2, 1643,[q] and you will find it is ordained among other things, that during the time that the minister read the whole Covenant to the people, "the whole congregation should be uncovered." There is one ce-

[p] [Husband's Collection, &c. p. 889.]
[q] [Ibid. p. 421.]

remony which now you will by no means endure should be imposed on you at the hearing of sermons. Then at the end of reading it they appoint that "all shall take it standing:" there is another ceremony. And lastly, that "they would lift up their right hand bare:" that is another, if not two ceremonies more. For they enjoin them to lift up the right hand, not the left; and that it should be bare, not covered with a glove. Thus you have ended, one would think, the dispute about the three ceremonies, having imposed the like yourselves. And this very ordinance touching the "manner of the taking the Covenant," they desired might be confirmed by act of parliament; as you may see in the propositions sent to his majesty at Newcastle, July 11, 1646[r]. Pray tell me, if you can, or else make inquiry, why they did not leave men to their way and manner of doing this religious act; seeing they would have nobody tied to a posture now in the worship of God: and why they do not cease to quarrel about our injunctions, since they found it necessary, it seems, to make as many of their own.

N. C. I will inquire; for I know no reason of it.

C. If you please, ask them another thing, which is, why they do not take their own advice which they give about the Covenant. For if they would, the Covenant need not keep them from doing that which otherwise many of them profess they could do.

N. C. You must be at the pains to interpret yourself; for I know not what you intend.

C. The parliament, in the ordinance now mentioned, desire the assembly of divines to prepare an exhortation for the better taking of the Covenant, which should be read together with it. Now in that exhortation (which was voted to be printed,

[r] [The second article of the Propositions is, "that his majesty, according to the laudable example of his royal father of happy memory, may be pleased to swear and sign the late Solemn League and Covenant; and that an act of parliament be passed in both kingdoms respectively, for enjoining the taking thereof by all the subjects of these kingdoms; and the ordinances concerning the manner of taking the same in both kingdoms be confirmed by acts of parliament respectively, with such penalties as by mutual advice of both kingdoms shall be agreed upon."—Husband's Collection, &c. p. 901. Rushworth, tom. vi. p. 309.]

Feb. 9, 1643[s],) the assembly entreat the episcopal clergy (who said they could not take the Covenant because it was against their former oaths) to consider this, which is the thing I would have them consider now; that "if any oath be found, into which any minister or others have entered, not warranted by the laws of God and the land; in this case they must teach themselves and others that such oaths call for repentance, not pertinacy in them."

N. C. I know what you are going to infer. But they will not yield that this Covenant was unwarrantable by the laws of God and the land, and therefore they will not repent of it.

C. It was plainly against the laws of the land, and those reasonable and good laws: from thence I conclude, it was against the laws of God, which would have us obey human laws that do not contradict them, and not combine together to destroy them.

N. C. They will never grant it was against the laws of the land; and I think you cannot prove it.

C. Did they not covenant to endeavour to preserve the reformed religion in the church of Scotland in doctrine, worship, discipline and government?

N. C. Yes, it is the first branch of the Covenant.

C. And did they not next of all covenant to endeavour to reform religion in these kingdoms of England and Ireland, in all points according to the examples of the best reformed churches?

N. C. Yes.

C. Then they were bound to reform us according to the pattern of Scotland: for that church must needs be the best reformed which needs no reformation; as it seems the church of Scotland did not, being to be preserved by them just as it was.

N. C. What of all this?

C. Then I will prove they bound themselves in an oath against the laws of the land. For our laws make the king supreme governor over all persons, and in all causes: but the presbyterial government, as it was in Scotland, (and was intended to be here,) though it allow the king to be supreme governor over all persons, (as they are his subjects,) yet will

[s] [Husband, p. 424. Rushworth, p. 477.]

not subject all causes to his government; because Christ, according to the discipline, "is the only spiritual King and Governor over his kirk[t]." As much as to say, they are subject only to Christ in some things; wherein the king hath nothing to do.

N. C. This is only a collection which you make from several things compared together, in which you may be deceived. Sure they never intended to set up such a government here.

C. That you may not be left therefore to my uncertain reasonings (as you will esteem them) in this particular, you may be satisfied about the mind of the assembly, if you be at all acquainted with the history of the late times. By that I am informed, they intended to bring the same government among us that was in Scotland; and secondly, they thought the parliament was obliged to set it up by virtue of the covenant. When these two things are proved, I believe you will be of my mind, that they took an oath against the laws, and therefore ought not to persist in it, but repent of it.

N. C. I shall be glad to hear them proved.

C. You must know then, that the parliament declared for presbyterial government, and passed most of the particulars brought them from the assembly without any material alteration; "saving the point of commissioners," as they tell us in a declaration of April 17, 1646[u].

[t] ["For this power ecclesiasticall floweth immediately from God, and the mediator Iesu Christ, and is spirituall, not having a temporall head in the earth, but onely Christ, the onely spirituall king and governor of his kirk. It is a title falsely usurped by Antichrist, to call himselfe head of the kirk, and ought not to be attributed to angel nor man, of what estate that ever he be, saving to Christ the onely head and monarch in the kirk."—Second book of Discipline of the church of Scotland, chap. 1. drawn up by a commission, and ratified by authority of the general assembly, A. D. 1581. See Calderwood's History of the kirk of Scotland, vol. iii. p. 529.]

[u] [Considerable opposition was manifested by the presbyterian party both in Scotland and England to that clause in the settlement proposed to be submitted to the king, by which the parliament denied to the several presbyteries an absolute power over their communicants, but reserved the last appeal to their own body. The general assembly and parliament of Scotland, in some papers which they transmitted by the hands of their commissioners in London, insisted, 5thly, "that the manner of subjecting church assemblies to the control and decision of parliament, being very liable to mistakes, the exemption likewise of persons of distinction from ecclesiastical censures, and the adminis-

N. C. What is the reason it was not set up?

C. Have patience, and I will tell you: these ugly commissioners stood in the way, which the assembly would not admit of, as the parliament would not admit of their arbitrary government[x].

tering the sacrament to some persons against the conscience of the ministers and elderships; these and some other particulars, being more than they can admit, they desire may be altered to general satisfaction."—After the delivery of these papers, and before the houses had returned any answer, they were published by a private hand, with a preface, which irritated the houses to such a degree, that on April 14 it was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman, which was done on the 21st. Meanwhile on the 17th the commons published their answer to the commissioners' papers with the title of, "A declaration of the commons of England assembled in parliament of their true intentions concerning the ancient and fundamental government of this kingdom, the government of the church, the present peace, securing the people against all arbitrary government, and maintaining a right understanding between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, according to the covenant and treaties."

Herein they declare, with reference to the present question, "First, concerning church government, we have so fully declared for a presbyterial government, having spent so much time, taken so much pains for the settling of it, passed most of the particulars brought to us by the Assembly of divines (called only to advise of such things as shall be required of them by both or either of the houses of parliament) without any material alteration, saving in the point of commissioners. And having published several ordinances for putting the same in execution, because we cannot consent to the granting of arbitrary and unlimited power and jurisdiction to near ten thousand judicatories to be erected within this kingdom, and this demanded in such a way as is not consistent with the fundamental laws and government of the same, and by necessary consequence excluding the power of the parliament of England in the exercise of that jurisdiction; and whereof we have received no satisfaction in point of conscience or prudence, which differ not in any fundamentals of religion, may be so provided for, as may stand with the word of God, and the peace of the kingdom:—

"It must therefore seem very strange to us, if any sober and modest men should entertain a thought that we should settle no government in the church, when our unwillingness to subject ourselves and the people of this land to this vast power, has been a great cause that the government hath not been long since established. And we desire it may be observed that we have had the more reason by no means to part with this power out of the hands of the civil magistrate, since the experience of all ages will manifest, that the reformation and purity of religion, and the preservation and protection of the people of God in this kingdom, hath under God been by the parliament, and their exercise of this power."—Husband's Collection, &c. p. 878. Rushworth, vol. vi. p. 257. Neal, iii. 251.]

[x] [In the ordinance of March 14, 1645, the parliament had decreed, "xiv. that in every province persons shall be chosen by the houses

N. C. Why do you call it so?

C. The title of the declaration tells you, that the intention of it is, among other things, to secure the people against "all arbitrary government," viz. in the church, which they spoke of before. But that you may be sure of it, they let you know when they come to that part of it which concerns church government, that the presbytery challenged an arbitrary power, which they could not grant. The reason was, because they would have set up "ten thousand judicatories within the kingdom," which should have had a supreme authority over us in many things. "And this was demanded in such a way (as they proceed to tell us) as is not consistent with the fundamental laws and government of the same; and by necessary consequence excluding the power of the parliament of England in the exercise of that jurisdiction." This was the very cause (as they further inform us) why they had settled no government since their sitting, because "they could not subject themselves and the people of the land" to so "vast a power" as the presbytery challenged; which, they tell us a little after, "would have been for the civil magistrate to part with some of his power out of his hands." Now before we go any further, I pray tell me, who was the supreme civil magistrate then but the king? And how will you excuse these men from going about to rob him of a part of his power, and wrest it out of his hands?

N. C. Sure they did not covenant to do this.

C. We shall try that by and by. But that you may better know how they meant to go to work, and to overrule the supreme power in many causes, you must understand these things: that it being resolved by both houses, that all persons guilty of notorious and scandalous offences should be suspended from the sacrament of the Lord's supper[y]; the assembly like-

of parliament, that shall be commissioners to judge of scandalous offences, (not enumerated in any ordinance of parliament,) to them presented;" and further, that in the case of persons suspended, the "said commissioners shall make certificate of the case or cases with their opinions to both houses of parliament with all speed. And thereupon the parliament shall proceed to a final determination of the case, and send the same to the parish where such offence shall have been committed." —Rushworth, vi. 227.]

[y] [Ordinance of March 14, 1645-6, Rushworth, vol. vi. p. 225. Parl. Hist. iii. p. 444.]

wise resolved, that these two powers lay in the eldership or presbytery, and only in them. First, "the power of judging and declaring what are such notorious and scandalous offences, for which persons guilty thereof are to be kept from the Lord's supper:" and then, "the power of conventing before them, trying, and actually suspending from the sacrament of the Lord's supper such offenders accordingly." Whereupon the commons desire to know "what certain and particular rules expressed in the word of God the eldership or presbytery had, whereby to direct themselves in the exercise and execution of those powers aforesaid," as you read in the questions propounded by them to the assembly, April the last, 1646[z]. Next they desire to know, "Why the supreme magistrate may not so judge and determine what are the aforesaid notorious and scandalous offences, and the manner of suspension for the same, and in what particulars concerning the premises the said supreme majesty is by the word of God excluded." And lastly, they would be resolved, what should hinder them to "appoint commissioners to judge of scandals not enumerated, (as they are authorized by the ordinance of parliament,) and whether to make provision of such commissioners was contrary to the way of government which Christ hath appointed." By these questions I believe you clearly see what authority the eldership intended to assume, if the parliament would have suffered them. But nothing more declares their meaning than their refusal to receive such commissioners as were now mentioned; in which they were so pertinacious that it hindered the settling of the government, which else might have been set up long before, as the commons there tell us. This was a notorious argument that they took themselves to be sole judges in some causes; which, in the judgment of the commons, was to exclude the supreme power, and to overthrow the ancient and fundamental laws of the realm; about which they express their true intentions in this declaration, as they tell us in the title of it.

And now I have but one thing more to prove, which is briefly this; that they would have had this authority set up by virtue

[z] ["Questions propounded to the Assembly of Divines by the House of Commons, April ult. 1646, touching the point of Jus divinum in the matter of church-government," § 7. —Husband, p. 881. Rushworth, p. 260. Parl. Hist. iii. p. 462.]

of the Covenant, which anybody may understand by what the commons there declare; that they will not suffer any one to "impose an interpretation of the Covenant upon them, other than they themselves think to be suitable to the just ends for which it was agreed." And withal, they desire the nation "not to receive impressions of any forced constructions of the Covenant; which, in case of any doubt arising, they say is only to be expounded by them by whose authority it was established[a]." This doth plainly enough inform us, that the assembly urged the parliament to settle that arbitrary government in pursuance of the Covenant. And if so, then their oath (as they took it) was contrary to the laws of the realm, as their masters declare, and would force the supreme magistrate's power out of his hands, which is contrary to the law of God: and therefore they ought not any longer to hold themselves bound by it, but rather should repent, as they advise others to do in that case. To sum up the whole business; an oath that is not warranted by the laws of God and the land ought to be repented of: your ministers took an oath not warranted by the laws of God and the land, but contrary to them: therefore they ought to repent of it. The former proposition is their own. The latter is partly theirs, and partly the commons' of England. For your ministers expounded the Covenant as if it obliged them to set up the presbytery in an absolute power; and the commons declared the exercise of such a power to be against the fundamental laws of the realm, and the authority of the supreme magistrate. (I might add, but that you little regard it, that his majesty in his proclamation declared it an unwarrantable oath, October 9, 1643[b].) And therefore, do you and they see

[a] ['Declaration' &c. as above, p. 423.]

[b] ["Whereas there is a printed paper, entituled, A Solemne League and Covenant for reformation, and defence of religion, the honour and happinesse of the king, and the peace and safety of the three kingdomes of England, Scotland and Ireland, pretended to be ordered by the commons in parliament on the twenty-first day of September last, to be printed and published; which Covenant, though it seemes to make specious expressions of piety and religion, is in truth nothing else but a trayterous and seditious combination against us, and against the established religion and lawes of this kingdome, in pursuance of a trayterous designe and endeavour to bring in forraigne force to invade this kingdome: we do therefore straitly charge and command all our loving subjects of what degree or quality soever, upon their alle-

whether the conclusion do not unavoidably follow; and make a good use of it, I beseech you, before it be too late.

N. C. As Paul said to Agrippa, that he almost persuaded him to be a Christian; so I must say to you, that you almost persuade me to be a conformist, and come to church.

C. I wish, as St. Paul said then, that you were *not almost, but altogether such as I am;* I mean, that you would not only come thither, but with such reverence and seriousness as becomes the service of God. But to come and sit, or loll, or look about, or whisper and talk, as many do, methinks it is as bad as staying away. Nay, it seems to be far worse, because it is a more public affront to God, even while we are in his presence; an open scorn of his worship, and a contempt of all his people that devoutly join in it. Therefore, for the love of God, never involve yourself in this guilt, as I see too many even of the great ones do; who show not half so much reverence before God in the time of divine service as the people do before the meanest justice of peace, nay, in his absence, before his country clerk. *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* And as I would desire you to pray with reverence, so to hear the sermon also with due attention, and without any prejudice or passion. Lay aside all naughty and corrupt affections, which blind the understanding, and will not let it discern the clearest truth. Witness the Pharisees, who could not see the most necessary things concerning everlasting salvation, though manifestly delivered in holy Scripture, and plainly proved by many illustrious miracles; and all because they were covetous, proud, self-conceited, and *loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* For what was more clearly set down in their books than the time of Christ's coming, together with the characters or marks of his person when he should appear? And what was more necessary to be known than him, when he came among them? In what were they so much concerned

giance, that they presume not to take the said seditious and traiterous Covenant. And we doe likewise hereby forbid and inhibite all our subjects to impose, administer, or tender the said Covenant, as they and every one of them will answer the contrary at their utmost and extreamest perills. Given at our court at Oxford, this ninth day of October, in the nineteenth yeare of our raigne. God save the king." Husband's Collection, &c. p. 358.]

every way as to receive and acknowledge him? And yet, notwithstanding, they could not see him, even when they saw him. They resisted the Holy Ghost itself, in the prophets both old and new. They could not endure such a Christ as taught them to be humble and pure in heart, and heavenly-minded, and meek, and merciful, and peaceable, and patient under all injuries, and obedient to government; and that would not oppose Cæsar, and advance them to power and dominion. From whence you see how necessary it is to follow the counsel of St. Peter, 1 Ep. ii. 1, 2. and *laying aside all malice, and all guile, and all hypocrisies, and envies, and evil-speaking, as a new-born babe desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.* Do not think I take too much upon me thus to instruct you: I do but repeat what I have heard from some of my instructors. And our minister told us the other day, that some render the last words thus: 'Desire the reasonable (or rational) milk without mixture,' it being the same expression which is in Rom. xii. 1, where we read of *reasonable service.* But that I find is a thing few care for; as little reason as you please will suffice them. So their fancies or their affections be but tickled, they care not whether it be with reason or without. Any little toy takes them, and if the exposition of Scripture which is given them be but pretty, they never mind whether it be solid or no. Now this, I have been instructed, proceeds from a vicious affection, from a lazy, slothful disposition of mind; from a loathness to be at any pains to understand the truth; nay, sometimes from all evil affections; from a love of the flesh and sensual things, and a too great strangeness and averseness to all the concerns of a soul. And assure yourself, there is no ignorance so black and dark as this which proceeds from corrupt affections. That which is the effect only of weakness of parts, want of opportunity, ill education, or bad instruction, may find some help, and be in great measure cured. A man of very mean natural parts, that hath an honest heart, may come to understand much; but this that I am speaking of, being chosen and affected, is in a manner incurable. Men love it and are concerned to maintain it, and will not understand the clearest reasons, but shut their eyes against them: and therefore, if you would profit by any sermon, come with a free and unprejudiced mind, with an

upright and true heart; and so you may be convinced of your errors, or grow in wisdom and understanding; and finally, think yourself as happy in our company as any where else.

N. C. You speak very reasonably and discreetly. But if I still remain unsatisfied, I hope you will love me, as one neighbour should do another.

C. Make no doubt of it. And the greatest act of charity I can express to you is, to advise you how you should behave yourselves while you continue to dissent from us. You were wont in the beginning of these differences to call yourselves the weak brethren. This was the language of your forefathers, who begged that they might be forborne, and treated gently; and, like the tender children of Jacob, driven no faster than they were able to go. But now none drive so furiously as you[c]. Nothing will serve your turn but to be the foremost, I mean the leaders of all: you would be masters of the law; you would rule and govern, as if you were the wisest and strongest Christians, nay, illuminated with a more singular degree of knowledge than anybody else. It doth not suffice you to let alone what is enjoined you, but you arraign it before all your neighbours; you judge and condemn it; nay, you thwart and oppose it; you would fain do execution upon it; and having pulled it down, set up your own fancies in the room. And so far hath this confidence carried you, that you would fain set up

[c] [In the collection of cases written to recover dissenters to the communion of the Church of England by some divines of the city of London, the same observation was forcibly put in a paper by Dr. Benjamin Calamy:—

"They who take upon themselves to be teachers of others, wiser and better than their neighbours, the only sober and godly party, and are too apt to despise all other Christians as ignorant or prophane, with what colour of reason can they plead for any favour to be shown, or regard to be had to them in compliance with their weakness? Though they love to argue against us from the example of St. Paul's condescension to the uninstructed Jews or Gentiles, yet it is apparent that they do not in other cases willingly liken themselves to those *weak brethren* or *babes in Christ*. They have really better thoughts of themselves, and would be leaders and masters in Israel, and prescribe to their governors, and give laws to all others, and to prefer their own private opinion (which they call their conscience) before the judgment of the wisest men, or the determinations of their lawful superiors. And if in all instances we should deal with them as weak persons, turn them back to their primer, advise them to learn their catechism, they would think themselves highly wronged and injured."
—p. 202. ed. 2. fol. Lond. 1694.]

your fancies in all the world, if you were able. For you know very well where you invited all reformed churches, and that in a way of prayer, that they would associate themselves with you in your, or the like covenant. I must desire you therefore, as you love your own and the kingdom's peace, to have a lower opinion of yourselves and gifts; and so to abate of your confidence, and your forwardness and violence to impose upon others. Set not so high an esteem upon your own models and draughts of government. Be content to obey, rather than rule. Let nothing of pride, ambition, vain-glory, and love of popular esteem, bear sway in your hearts. And oh that we could see all these evil spirits cast out by our prayers and fastings! Approve yourselves to be tender-conscienced; by your tender care in all your actions to be void of offence to God and man. Show that nothing in the world but your fear to displease God keeps you from us, by your humble carriage; by your speaking well of all, as near as you can; by saying nothing against the established religion; by honouring your superiors; by meeting very secretly, (if you must needs assemble in greater companies than the law allows,) that so you may not give a public offence. And I beseech you never meet in time of Divine service. Pray your ministers to search and examine, as much as they can, whether none of their auditors come to them only out of humour and love of novelty, and that they would exhort all that can to go to the public ordinances. For which end let them acknowledge in plain terms, that the worship of God among us is lawful, and far from being antichristian; that there are many godly men among us; that they themselves have received benefit from their labours. Let them express their sorrow that they are not enlightened enough to see the lawfulness of using some ceremonies, and desire the people not to follow their examples without their reasons. Speak well of your governors, and reprove those that do not. Believe not rumours and reports, and take care you be not the spreaders of them. Keep a day of humiliation for this sin among others, that you have been the authors or abettors of so many false and scandalous stories concerning the bishops and others. And do not excuse yourselves by saying that some stories are true; for I can demonstrate, if need be that it is not the manner of your people to examine

carefully whether things be true or no, before they divulge them; but presently they run away when they have got a tale by the end, and carry it about the town. By which means, right reverend persons (which is a horrid shame) have been openly charged in public assemblies with things notoriously false, without any ground at all. All which proceeds from your unmortified passions of anger, hatred, and uncharitableness, which make you hastily believe any thing that is bad of those you do not like. Let these things therefore be bewailed and reformed: as also your wresting of the Scripture, and bold, but vain pretences to the Spirit; in which, I beseech you, hereafter show greater modesty. It would do well also, if you thought upon all the contempt which hath been poured by you, or by your means, not only upon the bishops, but their order and function; and consequently upon all the ancient churches, who flourished so happily under that government: upon all the present ministry also, for whom no name could be found bad enough: nay, and more than this, upon all civil governors, for whom there is scarce left any such thing as honour and reverence. And now I speak of them, let me entreat you not to oppose their commands, if you cannot obey them; but only let them alone, and forbear to do them. And let this forbearance be with much modesty, humility, silence, and apparent trouble that you cannot comply with the public orders. Study uniformity as much as is possible; which you yourselves saw a necessity of in the late times. And where you cannot come up to the established orders, entreat the forbearance of your governors, with much submission. Live peaceably with your brethren. Let as few as may be observe your dissent. Labour to hide and cover, as sure you would do if you thought it a weakness. Do not seek to make or keep a party. Endeavour not to draw more company to your meetings. Let not those be flattered who are wont to come there, as if they were "Christ's jewels," the "garden of God;" intimating that others are but the pebbles in the common or the highways. Suffer them not to believe that they are "the little flock;" or to fancy themselves "under persecution;" and that they are bearing "witness and testimony to Jesus." And be sure to disown those who abuse the people with such tales as these, that the "gospel is in a

manner gone," and "God departed" from the nation: only he hath left them behind as his "agents "and "ambassadors," whom you must keep as a pledge of his return: for if he call them home, then he is "quite gone." These are the subtle devices to keep up the faction, and bring back our former troubles; which they call "God's return to the nation." These are the crafty arts whereby they engage the hearts of the people to them (being "God's agents"), and draw them from their governors. These are the mountebank tricks, whereby poor souls are made to believe that all but they are physicians of no value; and that healing must come by their means. *Let not* your *soul come into their secrets; be* you *not united unto their assembly:* but heartily acknowledge that we are still God's people, and that he is among us. This is the way to be approved of God, and to win favour also in the eyes of men; who will then be convinced you have tender consciences in those matters wherein we differ, when you are exactly conscientious in all other things. But if your consciences be so brawny as to be insensible of those spiritual wickednesses now mentioned, you must blame yourselves, if your governors be severe towards you.

N. C. That which you propose, I must confess seems very reasonable. But I pray, where did you learn all these things?

C. There, where you may learn a great deal more of your duty than I believe you have heard in other places, even at our own parish church; where we are not flattered presently into a conceit of our saintship, nor hear perhaps every day of the privileges of the saints, but we are taught how to be saints, and how to live like good Christians, and to value this as a singular privilege, that we have the gospel so plainly expounded to us, as to see how blessed they are who not only hear the word of God, but also keep it.

N. C. Truly, neighbour, as long as you live well I shall alway desire to maintain a familiarity with you, though you be not of my mind; believing that you are a Christian, though of another way. And I hope you will do the like with me.

C. I assured you of it before: but let me enter this proviso, that you talk no more about matters of religion; for unless you be changed by this discourse, we disagree so much, that it will be irksome to us both.

N. C. Not so; for I have learnt something of you, and if I can teach you nothing, yet I may learn more. Therefore I pray let us not cease to talk of the best things. What! would you have us converse together as mere heathens?

C. No: if you will consult how we may do most good in the parish wherein we live, and be a means of our neighbour's benefit and comfort, I shall be right glad of it. But to dispute I see is bootless, and so far from doing good to most, that it rather doth them harm.

N. C. Why did you enter into a dispute with me?

C. There are here and there some well minded honest hearts, who have left one ear open to hear the contrary party, and are resolved to weigh all things without prejudice. With such there is some pleasure and profit to reason; and I took you for one of that stamp. If I was deceived, pray pardon me this attempt, and I shall not trouble you so again.

N. C. I hope I shall not deceive you, for I intend to consider these things better when I am alone; and so bid you farewell.

C. I pray God be with you.

A CONTINUATION

OF THE

FRIENDLY DEBATE,

OR

THE SECOND PART.

A wise man feareth and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth and is confident.—Prov. xiv. 16.

Nihil feci dicis, imo nihil fateris. [Sen. de Ira, lib. ii. cap. 27.]
Non quis, sed quid; 'Not who, but what.'

Δεύτερον ἀγαθὸν, τὸ αἰσχύνεσθαι. [Synes. Epist. 67. p. 213 C.]

IMPRIMATUR

Tho. Tomkyns, R. Rmo in Christo Patri ac Domino Dmo Gilberto, Divina Providentia archi-ep. Cant. a sacris Domesticis.

Apr. 24, 1669.
Ex Æd. Lambeth.

TO THE READERS.

I SHALL only detain you so long as to tell you a few things that concern the motives to this work, and the author of it. For the former, take it from me (who know better than any body else,) they are none but the author's love to truth and peace; and his charity to well-meaning and abused people. Think what you please: I am sure he is not naturally sour or quarrelsome, much less angry with any man merely because he differs from him. He hath not been exasperated by contending, nor put out of humour by fierce disputings; for he hath no difference with any man living: he neither loves divisions, nor lives by them. He hath as much respect also and regard as he desires: so much as may secure him from the temptation of envying, and the mean arts of seeking to gain a reputation to himself by disparaging other men. As for hopes of preferment, which some have said are his end, besides that he studiously conceals himself, I declare, that if he were capable or desirous of it, he would not be at so much pains to seek it. And as he seeks not to gain any worldly thing hereafter by his writing, so he loses nothing at present by that which he writes against. For neither he nor any of his friends (that he knows of) receive the least prejudice by any man's nonconformity, or separated meetings; and so he should not have taken any notice of them, if religion had not been concerned. But he is very sensible that this suffers very much; and that which many ministers who keep separated assemblies cannot condemn, is condemned, nay despised, by those that follow them. For there is undoubted evidence that their not coming to the common prayers, and not declaring plainly the true reason of it, makes many stand aloof of and abhor our service, as if it were the mass. The people are seldom at leisure to examine the reason of things, nor apt to put themselves upon that work without much urging: but they are always ready to follow the example of those whom they admire, and the less they know why, the more forward they are to outdo the copy they choose to imitate. So that the ministers not doing what they can in compliance with the esta-

blished order, and not declaring sincerely the causes why they do not, is interpreted to a further abhorrence than they (if they durst speak out) are willing to own. When they do but signify their disgust, and that their palate is not pleased; their followers are nauseated presently, and their stomachs turned. If they make an halt, or a step back, these get the bit between their teeth, they kick and fling and run away. Now though this boggling and starting may be looked upon by many credulous and well-meaning people as the effect of a commendable caution, or a quick sense or perception of an approaching mischief, and of an exacter difference they make between good and evil than others do; yet experience tells us the contrary, that the more ordinary cause is defect of eyesight and confused apprehensions of things, ignorance and humour, if not restiveness and jadish tricks. For to give but one palpable instance of this among many; have you not observed at the funeral of a friend, when a sermon has been preached, how a part of the company, as soon as they come toward the church door, presently draw off and separate from the rest, as if they were going about some idolatrous service? Would not a stranger think that some noisome and offensive vapour or stifling smoke ascended from our devotions, which made these men so shy to enter, till by the singing of a psalm they had notice given that the air was clear and fit to breathe in, and then, it may be, they came in? But where lies the offence all this while, if we may be worthy to understand it? Is it in the white garment wherein the minister officiates? But why, I pray, is this more troublesome (unless to the tricks I spoke of) than a black one? There is nothing frightful sure in three sentences of Scripture, in reading a psalm of David, or a lesson of St. Paul; and yet this is all, save the *Gloria Patri* at the end of the psalm, which one would think might escape with fair quarter, especially now that their pursuit seems to be so hot after the fresh game of Socinianism. I know there are some sober persons who dissent from us that are not thus skittish; and finding them humble, modest, and not censorious, I not only love but honour them with all my heart. There are others also, who from the womb have been taught to start aside and to abhor our service; and being unable to reason, and uncapable of better information, I pity them very much. Let them but be quiet and not seek to govern us by their fancies and prejudices, and I for my part shall not look upon their aversion as a vice, if they will not account it their great virtue. For what if some children receive impressions and inclinations in their infancy from their mother's big-bellied frights or longings, which they carry with them to their graves?

What is the world concerned in this, or in those men's unaccountable antipathies? Is any man more commendable for them? Surely no; but oftentimes more troublesome. You have seen, it is likely, a person (pardon the instance I use, because it is familiar) as soon as the cheese after meal has been set on the board, presently make scurvy faces and change colour, stop his nose, or run in haste out of the room; yet neither the master or guests are further concerned in this than to pity, or perhaps but smile or slightly compliment the man's infirmity; and none forbears the more to taste that hath a need or a good liking. But you never heard of any such man who in a conceited humour thought fit in this case that his particular aversion should prescribe to all others, or raised fierce disputes about it in every company, and contended that this was no primitive food, or at least that our way was not the primitive way of making it; that endeavoured busily to make a party against it among the indifferent and uninclined either to love or hate it; much less that reviled and gave reproachful nicknames to those that used it, and sought for orders to banish it from every table. If you could suppose such prodigious folly, you would not blame the neighbourhood, especially the officers, if they were concerned in it, or any that should represent the ridiculousness or the malice of such an undertaking. I know the instance is not considerable enough to be applied to all things at this day contested, but to a great many it may, and expresses well enough the humour of thoes, who, according to their breeding, seem with an equal passion to oppose every thing they dislike, even to the colour of a garment, or the fashion of a girdle. You have enough, readers, concerning the motives to this Continuation of the Debate, when you are told this further, that the author having heard of some exceptions against the former book, thought good to answer and (as they deserve) to shame them in this. It is like, some of "our deceived brethren will hold this labour damnable and execrable, as being bestowed," in their opinion, "against the church of Christ, against the saints and children of God and his holy truth[a]:" to whom I answer, as the non-conformists did to the

[a] Preface to the Confutation of the Errors of the Brownists. ["A most grave and modest Confutation of the errors of the sect commonly called Brownists or Separatists, agreed upon long since by the joynt consent of sundry godly and learned ministers of this kingdome, then standing out and suffering in the cause of inconformity; and now published in a time of need, for the good of God's church, and the better settling of men's unstable mindes in the truth, against the subtile insinuations, and plausible pretences of that pernicious evill; published by W. Rathband, minister of the Gospell."—4to, Lond. 1644.]

old separatists, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth when I endeavour to speak, and my pen stick to my fingers when I attempt to write any thing against the church, the children, or the truth of God[b]." But the errors and follies in those whom I think to have some goodness in them may, I hope, be reproved without being thought to reprove their goodness. Besides, by endeavouring to keep them from being righteous overmuch, I take a course to preserve them from becoming too wicked.

And now, I believe, nothing would be more grateful to some than to know the author's name: but I have nothing to say to them, but that it is an impertinent curiosity to inquire any further after him, since he hath no mind to be known, and since there is no need of it. For his name can add no credit or strength to his reasons, and as for matters of fact, he hath directed you where to find them without inquiring after him to be resolved about them. But if any body think it good manners to inquire into that which others would have kept secret, yet I am sure it argues great want of good breeding (to say no more) to bespatter (as some have done) this and the other person whom they only conjecture to be the author; *laying to their charge things that they know not.* Let me advise them to be more civil, since I am sure they do not yet know me, nor, I believe, ever shall, unless I please; and since by disturbing themselves and others still in this kind, they are like to reap nothing save their own further shame. I end with the great counsel which Mr. Whittingham long ago concluded a letter of his withal[c]: "Know before you judge, and believe not all flying tales; keep one ear open, and report the best."

April 15, 1669.

[b] [Ibid.]

[c] Troubles at Franckfort, printed 1575. ["A brieff discours off the troubles begonne at Francford in Germany A.D. 1554. aboute the booke of common prayer and ceremonies," first printed in 4to, n. p. 1575," reprinted 'for the consideration of parliament' in 1642. and later in the Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 81.]

A CONTINUATION

OF THE

FRIENDLY DEBATE.

PART II.

C. You are well met, neighbour, how do you?

N. C. Very well, through mercy. Why do you sigh?

C. To see you so far from mending your schism, that you proceed to make it wider; and divide our very language. Why cannot you speak as the rest of your neighbours, and say, Well, I thank God? Is it a commendable thing to be singular without any need? and to separate from us even in your words and forms of speech? Or is this a part of the language of Canaan (so much talked of in late times), to be learnt of all those that will be accounted the people of God?

N. C. Take heed how you speak against the Israel of God. They are a peculiar people, and must not do after the manner of the nations.

C. What nations? Do you take us to be all heathens? Nay, such heathens from whom you are not only to separate yourselves, but utterly to root out?

N. C. You carry our meaning too far.

C. No further than some of your sect do, whom you have taught in a foolish and dangerous manner to imitate the Scripture phrase; and to apply all that concerned Israel to themselves; and all that concerned the seven accursed nations, or Egypt and Babylon, to their neighbours.

N. C. I am not one of those; but I and many others, when we are asked about our welfare, dare not speak as you do, lest we should take God's name in vain: of which you know Israel was to be very careful.

C. Is it to no purpose then to thank God for our own and our families' health? Or to pray God would be with our friend when we meet or part with him? Perhaps you think that Boaz took God's name in vain, when, according to the custom in Israel, he said to his reapers, *The Lord be with you:* and that they were offenders for replying, *The Lord bless thee.* I doubt ere long you will refuse to say upon occasion, GOD SAVE THE KING, for fear of taking God's name in vain.

N. C. Not so. We can use such words when we are very serious, but not commonly.

C. You made me believe, the last time we talked together, that you were commonly, if not always serious. But now it seems the world is altered with you.

N. C. We are afraid you are not serious, but use these words so carelessly that you break the third commandment: upon which account we would teach you to refrain them.

C. You are excellent interpreters of Holy Scripture! What a rare comment should we have upon it, if all your expositions were but gathered and put together! As you find words now used in common talk, so they sound to your fancy there: and this makes you take it so oft into your mouths in vain; I mean besides its purpose and intention. Alas! that you should be no better instructed than generally to entertain this conceit, that a man breaks the third commandment if he mention the name of God without lifting up his eyes, clapping his hand on his breast, or some signification of devotion! This absurd fancy I have heard some allege as a reason why they would not let their children ask them blessing; i. e. desire them to pray to God for them; and others have made this the cause why they would not teach them their catechism, nor any prayers, lest they should take God's name in vain; that is, in their sense, make mention of it, and not mind what they say.

N. C. I do not approve of such opinions as these.

C. If you did, you would condemn yourself many hundred times in a day. For how oft do you tell us in common discourse, of the *people of God*, and the *things of God*, and the *ordinances of God*, not minding that you mention his name? Nay, how many times have we heard you say in your prayers, O LORD, O GOD, (sometimes thrice in one sentence,) when we have great reason to think you did not know whether you used

it so oft or no. Now, which will you say? That you sinned in this; or that it is sufficient to have an habitual reverence toward Almighty God, and never to use his name in an irreverent manner; though we do not always actually attend when we use it?

N. C. I have not considered this; but was alway bred in a belief that we break the third commandment when we use God's name in common talk; and that is the reason I did not answer you after the usual manner.

C. It is well if you be not more careful to keep the commandment in the phrase sense than in its proper and principal meaning.

N. C. How now? must we be beholden to you to invent a new word for us?

C. It cannot be new to you, sure, who, are so well versed in the divinity that consists, in a manner, wholly of phrases, and, setting them aside, hath little or nothing in it; upon which account, it may well be called, phrase-divinity.

N. C. You will never leave your pleasantness. Pray talk more gravely, and explain yourself.

C. I will tell you then what I mean. There are many, I observe, who have been very scrupulous about the third commandment, and careful to keep it, as the words are vulgarly used in our language now-a-days; who have made no conscience at all of it, at least notoriously broken it, according to the true import of the words among the Hebrews. For, as I have been taught, when Moses said, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, &c.* his meaning was, that no man should dare to call God to witness to any thing he spoke, and yet utter a falsehood, or not do according to his promise. If he were so profane, he assures him that God who was witness to what he said would also be his judge, and by no means acquit him. Now how oft you have broken the commandment in this, which is the main sense, while you have been very strict to keep it in the other, I need not tell you.

N. C. You must tell me; or else I must tell you that you are like the devil, a false accuser of the brethren.

C. Your ministers can tell you a great deal better than I, who were wont to complain of this as one of the most grievous sins of the times; that so many had forsworn themselves

by breaking their Solemn League and Covenant. You covenanted, for instance, to extirpate heresy and schism[a]; and such great diligence was used in this point, that they grew faster and to a greater height than ever had been known among us. So Mr. Case tells the parliament in his thanksgiving sermon for the taking of Chester, p. 25[b]; and asks

[a] [The second clause of the Covenant is to the effect, "that we shall in like manner without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, (that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy,) superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness; lest we partake in other men's sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and the Lord may be one, and his name one, in the three kingdoms."]

[b] [On Feb. 2. 164⅝, the city of Chester surrendered to the parliamentary forces, in consequence of which success an ordinance passed the Lords and Commons that the 19th of that month should be set apart for a day of public thanksgiving to Almighty God for his great mercy, "in giving up the strong city of Chester into the hands of the Parliament, to be observed and kept in all churches and chappels in the several counties above ten miles distant from the cities of London and Westminster," &c.— Husband's Collection, p. 795. Whitelocke, 192.

On that day Case was appointed to preach before the Commons. His sermon bears the title of "A Model of true spiritual Thankfulnesse, delivered in a Sermon before the honourable House of Commons, upon their Day of Thanksgiving, being Thursday, Feb. 19. 1645, for the great Mercy of God, in the surrender of the City of Chester into the hands of the Parliament's Forces in Cheshire, under the command of Sir William Brereton: by Tho. Case, preacher in Milk Street, London, and one of the Assembly of Divines," 4to. Lond. 1646.

On the same day Mr. Joseph Caryl, then minister of St. Magnus the Martyr, preached before the House of Lords at St. Martin's in the Fields, and published by their desire his sermon with the title of "Joy out-joyed, or joy in overcoming evil spirits and evil men overcome by better joy." The second sermon before the Commons was preached by Francis Woodcock, of St. Olave's, Southwark; himself, as he reminds his "dear and much-honoured countrymen," a native of Chester; and entitled "Joseph paralleld by the present Parliament in his suffering and advancement."

Thomas Case was born at Bexley in Kent, of which place his father George Case was vicar. In the year 1616, being then about 17 years of age, he became student of Christ Church, on the recommendation of Toby Matthew, archbishop of York, and graduated M. A. in 1621. He was appointed shortly after to the rectory of Erpingham in Norfolk, from which he was suspended by bishop Wren, and summoned before the high commission court, but spared from trial by the dissolution of that tribunal by act of parliament in 1641. He afterwards preached at or near his native

them " how it comes to pass that these abound more than ever they did, and that under their noses? There is such a numerous increase (saith he) of errors and heresies, as I blush to repeat what some have affirmed, namely, that there are no less than an hundred and fourscore several heresies propagated and spread in this neighbouring city. And many of such a nature, as that I may truly say, in Calvin's language, The errors and innovations under which we groaned of late years (he means under the bishops) were but tolerable trifles, children's play, compared with these damnable doctrines, ' doctrines of devils.'" Nor is he alone in these complaints, but Mr. Edwards[c] craves

place in Kent. " At the turn of the times in 1641," says Wood, " he closed with them, and being schismatically addicted, he became an enemy to the bishops and liturgy, a great abettor of the pretended reformation, and what not, to vent his spleen, to become popular in the city of London, and consequently to get preferment and wealth, which before he wanted. About the same time he was rector of St. Mary Magd. Church in Milk St. in Cheapside, where it was usual for him at the invitation of the people to the Lord's table for the receiving of the sacrament to say, ' You that have freely and liberally contributed to the parliament for the defence of God's cause, and the Gospel, draw near,' instead of, ' Ye that do truly and earnestly repent,' &c. To the rest he threatened damnation, as coming unwillingly to the holy sacrament." In 1643 he was appointed one of the Assembly of Divines, and was a frequent preacher before the houses of parliament. He joined in the two remonstrances against the trial of the king. Refusing the Engagement in 1649. he was deprived of his living. To Case was due the establishment of the Morning Exercise in different churches in the city. In the year 1651, while rector of St. Giles' in the Fields, he became involved in the plot with the Scots, for the restoration of Charles II. for which Love the principal conspirator suffered death; he with others barely escaping sentence by a petition and act of humble submission to the Protector. In 1653 he failed in his attempts to be appointed one of the triers for the approval of candidates for holy orders, but was included among the ministers subsequently selected for that office by act of parliament under Monk's government in March 1660. He was one of those deputed in the same year to wait upon Charles at Breda, and was nominated one of the royal chaplains. At the Savoy conference he formed one of the presbyterian deputation. Refusing to conform on St. Bartholomew's day, 1662, he surrendered his preferment, and retired into private life, living to an advanced age, the last survivor of the Westminster Assembly, and latterly known as ' the old Mr. Case.' He died May 30, 1682, and an epitaph was set up to his memory in Ch. Ch. Newgate St.—Wood. Athen. Oxon. iv. 45. Calamy's Silenced Ministers, 12. Palmer's Non-Conformist's Memorial, i. 153.]

[c] Epist. Ded. to both houses before his Gangræna, 1 part. [Published in the year 1646.—" You

leave to be free with them, and to tell them that sects had been growing ever since the first year of their sitting; and every year increased more and more. No sooner had they "put down the Common Prayer, but down went the Scriptures themselves together with it," which many among us (saith he) "slight and blaspheme: the images of the Trinity, Christ, Virgin Mary, and the apostles were ordered to be broken down;" and at the next stroke there were those that "overthrew the doctrine of the Trinity, opposed the divinity of Christ, spoke evil of the Virgin Mary, slighted all the apostles." The parliament "cast out the ceremonies in the sacraments, the cross and

have made a Reformation, and blessed be God who put it into your hearts to do such a thing, but with the Reformation have we not a Deformation, and worse things come in upon us than we had before? Were any of those monsters heard of heretofore, which are now common among us? as denying the scriptures, pleading for toleration of all religions and worships, yea, for blasphemy, and denying there is a God?" &c.

Edwards' Gangræna is a catalogue of the principal errors, heresies, blasphemies, and pernicious practices of the time, arranged under sixteen general heads, set forth in one hundred and seventy six passages collected from various books and pamphlets, from the report of friends in all parts of the kingdom, to whom he had applied for materials. In the course of the same year he published a second and third part in the same vein.

"I doubt," says the pacific Jeremiah Burroughes, whom he had virulently attacked, "whether there ever was a man, who was looked upon as a man professing godliness, that ever manifested so much boldness and malice against others, whom he acknowledged to be religious persons. That fiery rage, that implacable, irrational violence of his against godly persons, makes me stand and wonder."—Burroughes' Vindication, &c. p. 2. 4to. Lond. 1646.

Thomas Edwards, remarkable among all the presbyterian party of his time for the violence and acrimony of his writings, was born in the year 1599, and became a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, fellow of Queen's, and one of the preachers to the university. For preaching openly doctrines of insubordination in a sermon at St. Andrew's church in that university, he was committed to prison, Feb. 11, 162⅞, and compelled in order to his release to make public recantation of his error in that church on April 6. Leaving the university in the year following, he was licensed to preach in London at St. Botolph's church, Aldgate. In the year 1640, he was arraigned before the high commission court for a sermon preached at the Mercers' chapel, asserting boldly the principal points of nonconformity. On the decline of the presbyterian interest, in defence of which he had issued the most violent diatribes, and perhaps through fear of the resentment of the independents, the chief objects of his attacks, he fled to Holland in 1647, where he died the same year of a quartan ague.]

kneeling;" and then the people in many places cast out the sacraments themselves, baptism and the Lord's supper." The one took away saints' days, and some of the other made nothing of the Lord's day. The "superfluous maintenance," as he calls it, of bishops and deans being cut off, immediately the "necessary settled maintenance of all ministers was cried down and denied too." Nay, the bishops and their officers being gone, there were many that would have thrown away all ministers after them. A great deal more you may find there to the same purpose, if you have a mind: but he seems to sum up all in this; "the fourth commandment was taken away in the bishops' days," (so he pleased to calumniate them;) "but now we have all ten commandments taken away at once by the Antinomians; yea all faith and the gospel denied by the Seekers." He would have inserted this clause, sure, if he durst; The third commandment is now taken away by the parliament. For I pray you, my good friend, what remembrance had they of the dreadful name of God, to whom they had lifted up their hands? What a trifle was that sacred oath now accounted! That "water of life" which (as Mr. Case fancied[d]) "had kept all the nation from giving up the ghost," was dead itself; and had not the least spirit remaining in it to quicken these covenanters to extirpate heresies. Nor would all the expostulations of their ministers put any life into them: but as these complainers had violated other obligations in taking that covenant, so now their masters set it at naught, and, to serve the ends of state, continued to connive at those things which they promised to root out. For a great while after this, I find no less than three of your divines (in their Epistle to the Reader, before Mr. Pool's book against Biddle[e]) renew their complaints, "that

[d] Sermons about the Covenant, p. 66. ["The Quarrell of the Covenant, with the pacification of the quarrel; three sermons on Lev. xxvi. 25. and Jer. l. 5." 4to. Lond. 1644.]

[e] [John Biddle, who has been called the father of English unitarianism, was born in the year 1615, at Wotton-under-Edge in Gloucestershire, and educated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, where he took the degree of M. A. 1641. In the same year he became master of the free school of Crypt in the city of Gloucester. His advocacy of tenets at variance with the doctrine of the Trinity, especially the article of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, exposed him to imprisonment from time to time, and he ended his life from a disease contracted by his confinement in the foul atmosphere of the prison, Sept. 22, 1662. His book

the whole body of Socinianism, which walked only in the dark, and in Latin, in the bishops' time, was now translated into English. Many bold factors for those blasphemies which in those times durst not appear, disseminating now their heresies without fear, both publicly and from house to house :" which by the way may instruct you who are to be charged with a great part of the guilt and mischief of such books as " The Sandy Foundation[f] (i. e. the doctrine of the Trinity) shaken," and

entitled, "Twelve arguments against the Deity of the Holy Spirit," the substance of a defence offered by him when arraigned before the Assembly of divines, was by an order of the House of Commons called in and burnt by the common hangman. (Whitelocke, 270; Commons' Journals, Sept. 6, 1647.) To this Matthew Poole, the learned author of the Synopsis criticorum, produced a reply, entitled " Βλασφημοκτονία, the Blasphemer slaine by the sword of the Spirit; or a Plea for the Godhead of the Holy Spirit. Wherein the Deity of the Spirit of God is proved in the demonstration of the Spirit, and vindicated from the cavils of John Bidle; the second edition with many additions, by Matthew Pool, Master of Arts of Emmanuel Colledge in Cambridge, and Pastor of the Church of God at Michael's Quern, in London," 12mo. Lond. 1654. The epistle " to the Christian Reader," is signed by James Cranford, Arthur Jackson, and Thomas Manton, with the imprimatur of Ed. Calamy.]

[f] [This was one of the earliest works of William Penn, the third apparently which he gave to the world. It owed its origin to the following circumstances. In the year 1668, two of the congregation of Mr. Thomas Vincent, who had a congregational chapel in the Spittal Yard, having joined the community of Quakers, gave occasion to their quondam minister to attack that sect from his pulpit in railing language, accusing them of holding most erroneous and damnable doctrines. Penn, being informed of this, demanded of Vincent, in conjunction with George Whitehead, an opportunity of defending himself and his community. A conference was accordingly held in Vincent's meeting house, at which several points were started and debated, but nothing fairly determined. From hence however Penn decided on laying the question before the public, in a little book, entitled, " The Sandy Foundation shaken, or those so generally believed and applauded doctrines of One God subsisting in three distinct and separate Persons, the Impossibility of God's pardoning sinners without a plenary satisfaction, the Justification of impure persons by an imputative righteousness, refuted from the authority of Scripture testimonies and right reason."

This tract, which is now scarce, is included in the author's " Select Works," published in 1825, vol. i. p. 129.

The publication gave great offence to the bishop of London and other high dignitaries of the church; and was the occasion of the author's first imprisonment in the Tower, where he was detained upwards of eight months. His release was attributable in part to an Apology for that work which he published in the meantime, called " Innocency with her open face."—Dixon's Life of Penn, p. 63.

several others lately published. In short, this was a thing so notorious, that Mr. Case moves the parliament (in that Thanksgiving sermon, p. 30.) that there might be a solemn fast "to humble and afflict their souls for covenant-violations, and wherein the covenant might be renewed in a more solemn and serious manner with God."

N. C. These were hot spirits, and might be too forward to charge the Covenanters with taking God's name in vain when they were not guilty of it.

C. But you will not say that the greatest part of the London ministers were rash and heady. Now, if you read their Seasonable Exhortation to their respective parishes, printed 1660, you will find they complain of "the odious scandals of those that profess themselves the people of God;" particularly of "their self-seeking under pretence of the public good, and their unparalleled breach of all civil and sacred oaths and covenants both to God and men[h]."

N. C. This, I confess, is a sad story.

C. Consider then, I beseech you, if these leaders and great professors were so guilty, what shall we think of the common people, who took the covenant hand over head (as we say), being totally ignorant of several things to which they swore; nay, were taught by Mr. Case (in his Sermons about the Covenant, p. 41,) "to take it, though they did not understand it?"

N. C. I cannot believe you.

C. Go to the book then, and believe your own eyes. There you will find he alleges the example of Josiah for it, who renewed the covenant when he was a child; and of Nehemiah, who made the women and children do the like. He was sen-

The impression created by this work, which was thought too able to be the production of so young a man, is well illustrated by the notice of Pepys in his Diary, Feb. 13, 1668–9. —"W. Pen's book against the Trinity; I got my wife to read it to me, and I find it so well writ, as I think it is too good for him to have writ it: and it is a serious sort of book, and not fit for every body to read."]

[h] [In the month of January 1660, during the period of excitement which accompanied the dissolution of the feeble government of Richard Cromwell, and while the public mind was unsettled by the prospect of the approaching restoration, an appeal was issued with the title, "A Seasonable Exhortation of sundry ministers in London to the people of their respective congregations," signed by sixty-three of the presbyterian clergy of the city, of whom Reynolds, then vicar of St. Laurence Jewry, is the first: in which they exhort the people of London "to

sible indeed, that there is a great difference between that which was divine, and this which was but the device of men; and therefore would persuade them that they were bound no further by this oath than they should find the things contained in it to be according to the word of God. But it is plain, I showed you the last time, the parliament did not allow any body to expound the covenant but themselves. And beside this, they sware without any limitation to preserve things as they stood in the church of Scotland, where, for any thing they knew, there might be as absolute a tyranny as is exercised under the papacy[i]. Nay, in Scotland itself there were some who argued so strongly against the covenant, that a jolly man I have read of[j] was driven to such straits at last as he had nothing to say but this, "that they must deny learning and reason, and help

awake as out of sleep, and to lay to heart the great dangers that threaten us," which they represent under a threefold consideration:

"First, the fears of the return of Popery,

Secondly, the distracted state of religion among us,

Thirdly, other symptoms of God's wrath hanging over our heads," p. 3. —See Kennet, Reg. p. 76.]

[i] [Compare the Burden of Issachar, by Maxwell, in the Phœnix, ii. 260.]

[j] Mr. Andrew Cant. [Andrew Cant was the episcopal minister of Pitsligo in the county of Aberdeen, and one of the 'apostles of the covenant.' He was appointed by the rebel tables to meet their other clerical agitators at Aberdeen in 1638, and to preach the covenant in that city in company with Alexander Henderson, minister of Leuchars, and David Dickson of Irvine, engaging in controversy with the professors of that University. In that year he was deputed to the general assembly at Glasgow, and adhered to the dissentient party who continued sitting after the king's commissioner had legally dissolved it. Acting as chaplain to the army under general Leslie, he assisted, as was customary, at all military councils. He was one of the Scottish preachers who were appointed by Leslie to preach at Newcastle during its occupancy by the army in 1640. Soon after he was forced upon the reluctant inhabitants of Aberdeen as one of their ministers. On Aug. 21, 1641, he preached before Charles I. and he annually attended the general assembly, and frequently preached before the conventions of estates. He joined the Protestors or Remonstrators among the presbyterian party, and was vehement in his opposition to the recall of Charles II. unless upon 'covenant terms,' i. e. upon condition of his signing the covenant, as his father had done. Cant was characterized by that peliar whining eloquence which has since been denominated after his name; and this, together with his personal denunciations and anathemas from the pulpit, and arrogance of conduct and demeanour in general, caused him such obloquy that he was obliged to resign his living, and leave the city. He died in 1664. It does not appear from what sermon or other work of his the expression in the text is taken. —Rose's Biographical Dictionary.]

Christ a lift." If you will give me leave. I will tell you something worse than this.

N. C. How is it possible?

C. There were some that in plain terms pleaded religion for the breaking of the covenant; so that (contrary to Mr. Nye's exhortation I told you of) with them there was yea and nay. J. Lilburn, for instance, in his England's Birth-right, p. 29, saith, that "the covenant is impossible to be kept," and that "the framers and makers of it have run into wilful perjury[k]." Nay, he calls it, "this makebate, persecuting, soul-destroying, England's-dividing and undoing covenant[l]." With whom you may

[k] ["England's Birth-right justified against all arbitrary usurpation, whether Regal or Parliamentary; or under what vizor soever, &c. by a well-wisher to the just cause for which Lieutenant-Col. John Lilburne is unjustly imprisoned in New-gate," dated Oct. 1645.

This was one of the productions of that indefatigable pamphleteer written during the term of his imprisonment in the Tower for seditious writings and contempt of the House of Commons.]

[l] See Mr. Bellamy's Vindication of the City Remonstr. May 26, 1646.

[On May 26, 1646, was presented to both houses of parliament "The humble Remonstrance and petition of the lord mayor, aldermen, and citizens of the city of London in common council assembled," in which among other grievances they deplore that they "find private and separate congregations daily erected in divers parts of the city, and elsewhere, and commonly frequented: and Anabaptism, Brownism, and almost all manner of heresies, schisms, and blasphemies, boldly vented and maintained by such as to the point of church government profess themselves Independents;" and petition accordingly—

"That some strict and speedy course may be taken for the suppressing of all private and separate congregations.

"That all Anabaptists, Brownists, heretics, schismatics, blasphemers, and all such sectaries as conform not to the publick discipline, established, or to be established by parliament, may be fully declared against, and some effectual course settled for proceeding against such persons.

"That no persons disaffected to the presbyterial government, set forth, or to be set forth by the parliament, may be employed in any place of public trust," &c.

The Remonstrance was published in a 4to. pamphlet, and is also printed at length, together with the answer of the house, in the Journals of the House of Lords, vol. viii. p. 332. and Parl. Hist. iii. 474. and a summary in Whitelocke, p. 206.

This having called forth several angry animadversions on the part of the separatists, a Vindication was drawn up, "according to order," by Col. John Bellamy, of the city militia, which he styled "A Justification of the city Remonstrance, and its Vindication; or an answer to a book written by Mr. J. P. entituled The city Remonstrance Remonstrated," &c. In this he further inveighs against "two late libels published by two Anonymusses against the said Re-

join Mr. J. Goodwin, who tells us (in his Twelve Cautions, p. 4.[m]) that "to violate an abominable and accursed oath (speaking with reference to this covenant) out of conscience to God, is an holy and a blessed perjury."

N. C. Now I hope you have done.

C. It ought not to be forgot that this Covenant was contrary to your Solemn Protestation, taken first by both houses of parliament, wherein they promised "to defend the true reformed protestant religion, expressed in the doctrine of the church of England[n]." Did they not?

N. C. Yes.

C. Why then did your ministers persuade them to enter into this new oath, which was so contrary to some articles of our church's doctrine?

monstrance, the one intituled, A Modest Reply to the city Remonstrance; the other called, The interest of England maintained." Bellamy's pamphlet is printed 'at London for Richard Cotes,' 4to. 1646. He quotes in it among other passages those here cited from Lilburne and Goodwin.]

[m] ["Twelve considerable serious cautions, very necessary to be observed in and about a reformation according to the word of God: wherein diverse particular inconsistences with the word of God, very incident to reformations (so called) are briefly insisted upon, and argued from the word of God, by John Goodwin, an unworthy servant of God in the Gospel of his deare Son."—4to. Lond. 1646.]

[n] [The following is the Protestation taken by both houses of parliament May 3, 1641, and subsequent days, pending the attainder of Strafford, and under the influence of the alarm excited by the discovery of the plot for his release, and for over-awing the parliament:—

"I A. B. do in the presence of Almighty God promise, vow, and protest to maintain and defend as far as lawfully I may, with my life, power, and estate, the true reformed protestant religion expressed in the doctrine of the church of England, against all popery and popish innovation within this realm, contrary to the said doctrine: and according to the duty of my allegiance I will maintain and defend his majesty's royal person, honour, and estate.

"Also the power and priviledge of parliaments, the lawful rights and liberties of the subjects, and every person that shall make this Protestation, in whatsoever he shall do in the lawful pursuance of the same: and to my power, as far as lawfully I may, I will oppose, and by all good ways and means endeavour to bring condign punishment on all such as shall by force, practice, counsels, plots, conspiracies, or otherwise do any thing to the contrary in this present Protestation contained: and further, that I shall in all just and honourable ways endeavour to preserve the union and peace betwixt the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland: and neither for hope, fear, or any other respects, shall relinquish this promise, vow, and Protestation."—Rushworth, iv. 241. Parl. Hist. ii. 777. Nalson, i. 810. Clarendon, 101. Echard, ii. 232.]

N.C. They explained themselves, as I remember, before they covenanted, and told us what they meant by the doctrine of the church of England.

C. Very good: and was it not finely done, that after the members of both houses had taken the protestation, so as I now said, the house of commons alone should make a declaration[o], that by those words "the doctrine of the church of England" was intended only so much of it as was opposite to popery and popish innovation, and should not be extended to the maintenance of the discipline and government? And then, that under this explication, published only by the commons and never assented to by the peers, this protestation was imposed on the kingdom, and all that would not take it declared unfit to bear office in church or commonwealth? What is there to be said, I beseech you, to excuse these strange proceedings? First, both houses swear to plain words: then one house claps an interpretation on them: and after that, they alone so far intrench upon the people's liberties (which they were bound to maintain) as to impose this protestation upon them without consent of parliament[p]; and that under a heavy penalty on those that

[o] ["May 13. Resolved, that whereas some doubts have been raised concerning the meaning of these words in the Protestation, 'The true reformed protestant religion, expressed in the doctrine of the church of England, against all popery and popish innovations in this realm:' the house doth declare that by these words was and is intended and meant only the publick doctrine professed in the said church, and that the said words are not to be extended to the maintaining of any form of worship, discipline, or government, nor of rites or ceremonies."—Rushworth, p. 273. Parl. Hist. 791. Clarendon, 101.]

[p] ["The bill for taking the Protestation being carried up to the Lords, upon debate thereof they voted, That they approved of the houses taking it in particular, but not for the general taking of it throughout the kingdom; and so cast the same out of the house. Upon which the house of Commons taking notice thereof, and conceiving that the bishops were the chief cause of rejecting their said bill, appointed a committee for their impeachment for making of the late canons; and then also voted, that no popish lords ought to have vote in the Lords' house in matters of religion, and then passed the vote following:—

"Die Veneris, 30th July 1641.

Resolv'd upon the question, That this house doth conceive, that the Protestation made by them is fit to be taken by every person that is well affected in religion, and to the good of the commonwealth, and therefore doth declare that what person soever shall not take the Protestation is unfit to bear office in church or commonwealth."—Rushworth, 357. Parl. Hist. 893.

should not comply with them. All this is no less than a demonstration, methinks, that too many of you (for we will not condemn all) have been too forward to take God's name in vain; at least, to engage yourselves in oaths and vows hastily and rashly. And, withal, it shows that you were of that imposing spirit which you now complain of, and that religion was more pretended than truly aimed at. And, lastly, that you were so vainly confident of your favour with God, that you could take his name into your mouths backward and forward, and never blush; so you did but look demurely, and express much reverence to it in common talk. All which, I protest, is spoken to no other purpose but to humble you, and to show that you unjustly usurp the name of the most religious people, the most conscientious, and the most fearful of offending God that are in the nation: and that you abuse the simple, when you make them believe that you are the pillars upon which the kingdom's welfare stands; for whose sake alone it is that we were not made long ago Sodom and Gomorrah. For it is manifest you have involved the people in abundance of guilt, and made religion vile in their eyes, and helped to bring the name of God, which you have taken so oft in vain, into great contempt.

N. C. This is not a place to talk in.

C. You say right: otherwise I should have told you of a fresh guilt of this kind. For I am informed some have set up schools for the instructing youth in logic and philosophy, directly contrary to the oath they took in the University. But I am run beside my intention in this discourse: having told you, I remember, it would be in vain to dispute any more; and therefore desired, when we met again, the time might be spent to other purposes.

Clarendon has traced the successive steps by which this glaring encroachment of the lower upon the upper house led the way to the restriction and ultimate abolition of the latter.

In the same year appeared a pamphlet of a virulent kind, "The Protestation protested, or a short remonstrance, shewing what is principally required of all those that have or doe take the last parliamentary protestation," in which the author declares his conviction "that all men were obliged by the late protestation, by what means soever, to remove both bishops and the Common Prayer book out of the church of England as impious and papistical." It bears no author's name, but Clarendon informs us that it consisted of a sermon previously preached at Westminster by the notorious Henry Burton.]

N. C. I have not forgot it: but if you will go in here we will not wrangle at all, but only talk fairly, as loving friends, of some matters in which you are concerned.

C. I suppose it is about our old business, and then you had better consider of what I have said already: if that will not move you I have little hope to do any good upon you.

N. C. You are a strange man. When I had no great mind to be troubled with your discourse, then you would never have done; and now that I am earnest to be satisfied in some things, you hang back and have nothing to say. Methinks you might be willing at least to receive an account of my thoughts concerning our late debate.

C. Have you then considered what I said, as you promised you would?

N. C. Yes, that I have: and being somewhat staggered with it, I thought good to consult with some Christian friends, and hear their opinion, which I prefer before my own.

C. And what was the issue?

N. C. I perceive they are generally offended at you to a high degree.

C. So were the scribes and Pharisees at our Saviour: and for any thing I know both upon the same score, because you are plainly told of your faults. This nettles and vexes you at the heart; only, to hide and conceal your secret anger, you call it by another name, and say you are offended.

N. C. No, they are not angry with those who give them a private reproof; but to print a book against them, what can it intend but mischief?

C. Now I guess at their meaning. Their offence is of the same nature with that which Mr. Edwards saith the sectaries took at his Gangræna[q], "because it hinders their making proselytes, and so for want of growing up to such a number as they design and hope for, they may miss of a toleration, and so in the issue a domination, which is so much sought for by them."

N. C. They mean the same that the apostle doth, who requires us to *give no offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Greeks, nor to the church of God.* 1 Cor. x. 32.

[q] Second part, p. 135. ["The Second Part of Gangræna," &c.—4to. Lond. 1646.]

C. By your favour, sir, St. Paul and you have not the same meaning: as you might have learnt long ago (if you did not converse more with your frivolous writers, than those who have some sense in them) from your great champion Mr. Cartwright. He tells you expressly that by *offence* the apostle doth not intend that which displeaseth, or discontents, but that whereby occasion is given to any of transgressing against the laws of God. For he is treating of eating things offered to idols, even in the temples of idols, or in the presence of such as were endangered thereby: the gentiles being hardened in their idolatry, the Jews provoked against Christianity, and some Christians drawn by such examples to follow them doubtingly. Take now the word in this proper sense, and I shall be cleared from this imputation, and you yourselves condemned for looking no better to your feet that they go not awry.

N. C. How so?

C. It is the very design of my book to keep you from falling into sin any more; and to direct you to such a course that you may not break the laws of God again yourselves, nor cast such a stumblingblock before others that they take occasion to break them too. If any have misinterpreted my meaning, or out of anger and vexation grown worse and more audaciously violent by my writing, they must bear the blame which they would throw upon me. Nay, a far greater blame, for they both take offence when none was given, and they notoriously give offence to others whom I would have kept from offending.

N. C. They will believe both alike; that you meant to take away offences, and that they lay any in the people's way.

C. That is, they seldom believe any good of others, or any ill of themselves. But I do not beg your belief, for it is manifest to any unprejudiced reason that the book was sent abroad on no other errand than to remove stumblingblocks out of everybody's way; especially your schism, which is the greatest of all. And if notwithstanding you be scandalized, and confidently affirm it were better to forbear such writings, you shall be judged out of the mouths of some of the old and better nonconformists: who tell their brethren of New England, (and I say the same to you,) when they would have had them forbear to read the Common Prayer because of the scandal it gave to some, "It is a scandal taken and not given; and by forbear-

ing we shall offend you the more, if to confirm men in error be to scandalize them; yea, we shall prejudice the truth; and it might be an occasion to beget needless scruples in others, and draw men ignorantly from the fellowship of the saints and the holy ordinances of God, and strengthen them who, by your own confession, are run too far into schism already."

N. C. Whose words are these?

C. You may find them, p. 16, in the Reply made 1640. by many ministers in Old England, to the Answer which their N. E. brethren gave to their inquiry about nine positions in the year 1637[r]. And I would to God your ministers would lay them to heart, and no longer continue to harden their followers in schism by forbearing the use of that which they know is lawful. Remember, I beseech you, the famous observation of a great author[s], that "heresies and schisms are of all other the greatest scandals, yea, more than the corruption of man-

[r] [In the year 1637, certain of the presbyterian clergy appealed to their brethren of the churches of New England, complaining of sundry innovations and irregularities which had crept in among them, "such as you disliked formerly, and we do judge to be groundlesse, and unwarrantable. As that a stinted forme of prayer, and set liturgie is unlawfull; 2. That it is not lawfull to joyne in prayer, or to receive the sacrament, where a stinted liturgie is used; 3. That the children of godly and approved Christians are not to be baptized untill their parents bee set members of some particular congregation; 4. That the parents themselves, though of approved piety, are not to be received to the Lord's Supper, untill they be admitted as set members; 5. That the power of excommunication, &c. is so in the body of the church, that what the major part shall allow, that must be done, though the pastors and governors, and part of the assembly be of another minde, and peradventure, upon more substantiall reasons; 6. That none are to be admitted as set members, but they must promise not to depart, or remove, unlesse the congregation will give leave; 7. That a minister is so a minister to a particular congregation, that if they dislike him unjustly, or leave him, he ceaseth to be a minister; 8. That a minister cannot performe any ministeriall act in another congregation; 9. That members of one congregation may not communicate in another."

On these nine points, which embrace the principal topics then and subsequently at issue between the presbyterians and independents, the elders of the New England churches delivered their resolution in an Epistle and short Treatise transmitted to England in the year 1639: to which a Reply was returned in the year following by the writers of the original appeal. The whole were published in a 4to pamphlet in 1643 by Simeon Ash and William Rathband.]

[s] Lord Bacon, Essay of Unity in Religion. [Essay iii. Works, vol. i. pp. 8, 9.]

ners. For as in the natural body a wound or solution of continuity is worse than a corrupt humour; so it is in the spiritual. Nothing doth so much keep men from the church, and drive men out of it, as breach of unity." One of his reasons is, because "every sect hath a diverse posture or cringe by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings and depraved politics, who are apt to contemn holy things." It is possible you may think, for you are very censorious, that he was no better than one of those depraved persons, and so take no heed to his words. Let me remember you, therefore, that there was a time when the presbyterians applauded this observation, and laboured to serve themselves of it. For I find it cited in a book called "Wholesome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty," licensed by Mr. Cranford, 1644[t]. where the author likewise says, that "the experience of former times makes us so wise as to foresee that heresy and schism tend to the breach of the civil peace, and to a rupture in the state as well as the church[u]." Of which he gives many instances, especially the Donatists in Afric, and the Anabaptists in Germany. But now it seems you are grown stark blind; and whereas you had a foresight in times past, at present you cannot or will not see what is before your eyes———

N. C. I told you I would not enter into long disputes with you. But I am heartily sorry that you have so much grieved all the godly.

C. You still persist in your old uncharitableness, pride, and high esteem of yourselves above all others. Or if you mean only all the godly of your way, yet you are guilty of great partiality, in taking a liberty which you will not give. For you say what you list against that way, wherein so many good

[t] ["Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty, or the true resolution of a present controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience. Here you have the question stated, the middle way betwixt popish tyrannie and schismatizing liberty approved, and also confirmed from Scripture and the testimonie of divines, yea, of whole churches: the chiefe arguments and exceptions used in the Bloudy Tenent, the Compassionate Samaritane, M. S. to A. S., &c. examined, eight distinctions added for qualifying and clearing the whole matter, and in conclusion, a Parœnetick to the five apologists, for showing accommodation rather than toleration."—4to, Lond. 1645.]

[u] [P. 13.]

people among us truly serve God; and make it ungodliness in us to say any thing against yours. Pray give me a reason, when you have duly considered it, of this unequal dealing. You speak and write against the bishops, Common Prayer, the ceremonies; nay, many of you openly revile them, to the just grief of our people; and all this with a reputation of great godliness[x]: but we must sew up our mouths, and not say a word against you and your devices; or else be accounted ungodly and profane; nay, it is well if we escape the brand of atheism. What is this, but to imitate those hucksters who have double weights and balances, one for buying, another for selling? to have one measure for yourselves, and another for all other folk?

N. C. I do not approve of this.

C. But you side with those that play these tricks. And besides, you that are so loath to be grieved in the vulgar meaning of the words make light of grieving others in the proper sense of it. For you have so sorely galled and wounded many by your practices, that the anguish hath been such as (according to the observation now named) to thrust some back who were coming to us, and drive others out who were among us. The reproaches, I mean, which you have cast upon our church, the divisions you have made, the confusion you have been authors of, have been such thorns in some men's way, that when they were just at the door of our Church they have drawn back their foot and fallen back to the popish religion. Of this I have good evidence; and such as you dare not question of the other; that some have taken such distaste at the state of things among us, as to turn aside out of the right way into the bye-paths of Romish superstition and idolatry. Witness the Seasonable Exhortation of a great number of the London ministers[y]; who tell us, "that some are fallen from the truth which they saw so much despised, and backslidden to popery, as the only religion, in their opinion, wherein unity and order is maintained." And a little after, p. 16, they say they are afraid "lest too many may be too well conceited of that religion..., finding Rome justified by England's confusion, as Sodom was by Israel's sin." You may say, perhaps, according to your usual manner, that all these were wicked. But this is not so easily proved, as peremp-

[x] [Compare pp. 379, 408. above.] [y] [Referred to above, p. 449.]

torily said. And there want not good reasons to make us think, that several well disposed persons, by occasion of this schism, and the scorn cast upon our governors and divine service which accompanies it, have forsaken our communion, and gone thither where they heard there was more unity, order, and reverence to authority.

N. C. Our ministers are as much against those who revile your worship and service, or do not reverence authority, as you can be.

C. How doth that appear? There is nothing more frequent with such as Mr. Bridge, than to teach the people that our way of worship and church government is antichristian. Read but the fifth of his Ten Sermons, p. 370[y], and you will see I do not belie him. Or, for more full satisfaction, I refer you to another book of his, called "Seasonable Truths in Evil Times[z]," where you may find him instructing them too plainly (p. 118), that such as he "have their orders to preach or prophesy from Jesus Christ himself;" but others (by whom he can mean none but our ministers) "have their orders and power from men, from prelates, from the beast:" for these are all one in his language. Nay, more than this, he teaches the poorest, weakest man or woman to "go to Jesus Christ for a power to prophesy:" remembering them what one Alice Driver said in queen Mary's days, "I will set my foot against the foot of the proudest prelate of them all, in the cause of Jesus Christ." And therefore "why should you not go to Christ," says he, "and lay yourselves flat upon the promise, and say to him, O Lord, I am a poor weak creature, I fear I shall never be able to bear my testimony; but thou hast said, I will give power to my two witnesses, and I am one of thy witnesses: now then, O Lord, give power to me," &c. By which you may judge what he thinks of those magistrates that uphold our worship and orders, and allow no such weak creatures as his silly credulous followers to commence prophets and prophetesses, whenever they shall fancy that Jesus Christ himself hath given them power and orders to preach; and whether they be the "godly magistrates" or no, "God's anointed ones," whom he speaks of, p. 110[a].

[y] ["The Way and Spirit of the New Covenant," &c. Works, vol. iii. p. 92.]
[z] Newly printed, 1668. [Serm. iv. Works, vol. iii. p. 358.] [a] [P. 352.]

N. C. Those that I am acquainted withal dislike his boldness as much as yourself.

C. If the rest of your ministers have such an hearty abhorrence as I have of those that cast dirt even in the face of authority itself, let them show it by some means or other. Why do they not petition his majesty now, as some of your churches did the late protector not many years ago, that he would chastise such persons as these?

N. C. I remember no such thing.

C. But I do, and you shall find it in the address presented to Richard Cromwell from the county of Northampton [b]. There, after many high commendations of his father, (whom they call "the light of their eyes, and the breath of their nostrils,") and great expressions of joy that he had left him to them "as a most choice legacy," they desire he would "show tenderness toward the name of God against the bold blasphemers of his magistracy, defamers of his sacred ordinances, seducers from truth, corrupters of his worship." And then, that he would "exercise just severity against despisers of dignities, and revilers of authority, whose unhallowed tongues (set on fire from hell) spare not to flash out their insolent reproaches and impious execrations against his father's sepulchre, and his own throne." But I consider that in those days it was their concernment to have despisers and revilers punished; now they serve the cause, and help to disgrace the present establishment: which is the reason, I suppose, that all the churches are so mute in this matter.

N. C. You take the liberty to say what you list; but let me say a little or nothing: and when you have done, you write a dialogue between yourself and a non-conformist; in which you make him speak just what you think good, and no more. Is this fair dealing?

[b] [The address from the county of Northampton, presented by Sir Gilbert Pickering, Dec. 6. 1658. is contained (p. 32,) in the collection published in 4to, without date, but probably in the year 1659, with the title, "A True Catalogue, or an account of the several places and most eminent persons in the three nations, and elsewhere, where and by whom Richard Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, &c. printed in the first year of the English armies small or scarce beginning to return from their almost six years great apostacy."]

C. Where did you get the sole privilege of writing dialogues? You imagine, perhaps, we have forgot those that you entertained the people withal some years ago; but our memories are not yet so slippery. I call to mind, for instance, the dialogue between a Country Gentleman and a Minister of the Word, about the Common Prayer, answered by authority, 1641[c]; and another between a Loyalist and a Royalist, about our civil liberties, *an.* 1644. The first of these I can scarce forget, if I would; the author of it (Mr. Lewes Heughes) imparting to me such an extraordinary piece of learning as this, that *Kyrieleeson* is a word compounded of Hebrew and Greek, signifying in English, 'Lord, have mercy upon us[d].' He furnished me also with a memorable reason why the Mass-book leaves out the doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer; "because the pope," says he, "will have none of his church, neither priest nor people, to give so much honour and glory to God." Which he was so well conceited of, that he repeats it twice within the compass of a few leaves[e]. This good man, I sometimes fancy, would have been a chosen instrument, and done marvellous well, to write a *rationale* of the directory: in which he might have told us that *rationale* was a word compounded of Latin and English, signifying 'all reason:' and informed us, in particular, that the cause why the assembly left it to men's liberty, to leave out the whole Lord's Prayer if they pleased, was only this, "that all their church

[c] ["Certaine greevances well worthy the serious consideration of the right honourable and high court of Parliament, set forth by way of Dialogue in Conference betweene a Countrey-gentleman, and a Minister of God's Word, for the satisfying of those that doe clamour, and maliciously revile them that labour to have the errors of the Booke of Common Prayer reformed. By Levves Hevves, minister of God's Word, printed in the yeare 1640." The same work slightly altered in title and contents was reprinted in the following year (which Patrick seems in a subsequent page to have mistaken for a separate production); and 'the fifth time imprinted, corrected, and much enlarged' in 1642. It was answered soon after its first appearance by "Mr. Lewes Hewes his Dialogue answered; or an answer to a Dialogue or Conference betweene a Countrey-gentleman and a Minister of God's Word, about the Booke of Common Prayer, set forth for the satisfying of those who clamour against the said Booke, and maliciously revile them that are serious in the use thereof. Whereunto is annexed a satisfactory discourse concerning 'Episcopacy and the Surplisse,' published by authority,"—4to, Lond. 1641.]

[d] [P. 6.]

[e] [Pp. 4, 16.]

might give all honour and glory to Jesus Christ." So I suppose his affection would have made him say; though if he had followed his reason, it would have led him to this; "that as the pope left out some of it, because he would not do our Saviour so much honour: so they permitted men to leave out all, that every man might do him as little honour as he pleases."

N. C. You cannot for your life forbear to lead me now and then to some mirth.

C. I intended only to represent how your ministers sometime abuse themselves, more than any of us ever did. As for myself, I am not conscious of the least abuse I have put upon you; nor that I have made you say any thing but what your people are wont to talk. Certain I am that all the wit your party hath shall never be able to find any such absurdity in my book, as that dialogue against the Common Prayer is guilty of; where the minister makes the gentleman presently confess it to be full of popish errors, and to appoint horrible blasphemies and lying fables to be read to the people[f]. Nay, makes him cry out, almost as soon as they had begun their discourse, "O horrible! How have the bishops deluded king Edward the Sixth, queen Elizabeth, king James, and our gracious king Charles, and the whole state; and made them believe there was nothing in the service-book that is amiss, or any way contrary to the Word! God Almighty deliver us from them." I should blush to the end of my life, if after our whole debate I had concluded as this man begun. But this is the way of those sots, that talk as if they were infallible, and would bear all before them by their bare word; nay, take it very ill if you be not converted, as soon as they open their mouth. Pythagoras is revived in some of you; and "Mr. such a one said it" is of as good authority as the best proof in the world.

N. C. This was some ignorant zealot, I believe.

C. So one would think; and yet he had so good an opinion of himself, that he thought such words as these fit for the eyes of the high court of parliament. To whom I find he presented

[f] [P. 12. The 'horrible blasphemies and lying fables' referred to are the lessons from Tobit appointed for Sept. 30, and Oct. 1, 3, 4.]

" Certain Grievances," *an.* 1640. of the very same import with this goodly dialogue, but so absurdly slanderous, that you cannot but be astonished at his brutish stupidity. For there he tells them (as he doth the gentleman at the conclusion of their conference) that the bishops have appointed some portions of Scripture to be read on certain days, and omitted others, on purpose to pervert the meaning of Christ, and to " keep weak Christians in blindness."

The whole book of Canticles, for instance, is never appointed to be read, that the people (as he will have it) may not be " able to see the ardent love and affection of Christ toward his spouse, the elect:" and they " thereby be stirred up to love Christ and be truly zealous for his glory." Nay, if you believe him, the books of the Kings (all save the eight first chapters) and the Chronicles were forbid, " because they shew that godly kings did ever love God's true prophets, and did hearken to them, and were zealous of maintaining true religion, and suppressing idolatry." In which words he discovered the very grounds of their quarrel with the king, viz. that he did not take such great seers as himself into his bosom; and suffer them to guide his conscience, as if they were of the privy council of heaven. But he discovered withal how little esteem he for his part merited: or rather, how well he deserved to be stigmatized and branded in the forehead, as one (to speak in his own language) that was a false prophet, prophesying lies. For was there ever any man before this so impudent as to put a libel of this nature against his spiritual fathers and governors into the hands of the highest court of the kingdom? Did any of the priests or prophets of Baal, think you, ever help themselves and their cause by such invectives against the prophets of the Lord? For my part, I am of the mind that the devil himself would be hard put to it to invent more bold and malicious slanders than these of this man's forging, who wanted nothing but wit to make him like that father of lies. And yet, I suppose, he passed for a godly man, a precious servant of Jesus Christ, a faithful minister of the Lord; nay, was cherished and encouraged as one of God's prophets, who had told them things that could be known no ways but by a revelation. His book also, no doubt, found wonderful acceptance, though it was stuffed with so much igno-

rance and railing. The people read it with a blind devotion, just as he was transported with so blind a passion, as to accuse our church of that which all that had eyes must needs acquit it of. For both the books of the Kings were appointed to be read entirely in the latter end of April and in May. As for the Chronicles, they being little more than a repetition of what was writ before might well be left to our private reading; together with some other books not easy to be understood without great labour and long meditation.

N. C. I wish you would dismiss this man, for he hath given us both too much trouble.

C. Your people would not, when time was, so easily lay his book out of their hands, as I am able to prove. But let him go; together with all the crew of revilers that were before him. For you must know there were dialogue-writers of the same stamp in the days of your forefathers. In one of which books, called the "Dialogue of White Devils," the author expressly tells us, that "if princes hinder the bringing in of their disciples, they are tyrants; and may be deposed by their subjects." A doctrine which, with all your reading in the books of the Kings and the Chronicles, you will nowhere find justified: for the people were better taught than to go about to depose those that did not favour the Lord's prophets. I know you all disclaim this principle; and I verily believe many of you abhor it: but I mention it to let you see what the maxims of some of your predecessors emboldened some of their posterity to do. For this purpose I could relate strange passages out of some books esteemed by your party; which would verify the censure of the bishop of Down and Connor upon the title of the dialogue now named[g]. Which he saith

[g] In his visitation speech at Lisnegarvy, 1638. published by authority, p. 11.

[Henry Lesley, or Leslie, was a native of Scotland, of the noble family of the Rothes, doctor of divinity, dean of Down, and treasurer of St. Patrick's Dublin. He was chaplain to king Charles the First, was consecrated bishop of Down and Connor at Drogheda, in St. Peter's church, on the 4th of October 1635, and translated to the see of Meath, after a vacancy of nearly ten years, on the 18th of January 1660, being succeeded in that of Down and Connor by Jeremy Taylor. He sank under the burden of old age, and died in Dublin on the 7th of April 1661, and was buried on the 10th of the same month at Christ Church, in that city. (Ware's Hist. of Ireland, i. 158, 208.) The speech or charge delivered by him at

was " very fit for such men's books; for if ever there were white devils, or devils transformed into angels of light, it is in their persons who, under the pretence of sanctity, labour to bring in all manner of disorder into the church, and confusion into the commonwealth." But you have no mind we should remember any thing that is past; that so you may the more confidently fill the world with loud clamours, as if there never were such doings as now. Else you might know there was another dialogue in queen Elizabeth's days, between Diotrephes and St. Paul[1]; in which discipline and its favourers are

his visitation at Lisnagarvy, Sept. 26, 1638, " wherein is a full confutation of the covenant lately sworne and subscribed by many in Scotland," besides being published in English in 1639, was put forth in the same year in a Latin translation by his chaplain James Portus, with the title of " Examen conjurationis Scoticæ, sive oratio habita Lisnagarve in visitatione diœceseos Dunensis et Connorensis. Latinitate donavit Jac. Portusius."]

[1] [This is one of the scurrilous libels of the Mar-Prelate series, written by Udal, and printed by Waldegrave at Mrs. Crane's house at Moulsey, near Kingston, in Surrey, in the year 1588. (Strype, Ann. Append. p. 603; Whitg. i. 549; Fuller, v. 129; Heylin, Hist. Presb. 268.) It appeared, like the rest, anonymously, and without date or printer's name, in small 8vo, with the title: " The state of the church of Englande laide open in a conference betweene Diotrephes a byshop, Tertullus a papist, Demetrius an usurer, Pandocheus an inne-keeper, and Paule a preacher of the Worde of God."

In it Paule is made to say, " Woulde you have them contented with antichristian prelates, to be rulers of the spouse of Christ, when as the word of God hath prescribed expresly another form direct contrary to that? *Diotreph.* I am a doctor of divinitie at the lest, and yet could I never read anythinge in the worde of God contrarye to this governement, neither yet to speake of any other, but that the ordering of the church is left to the discretion of the wise and learned. If their Lordsh. were taken away, the credite of the gospell would fal to the ground, and men would not regard it. *Paule.* Nay, their jurisdiction maketh it not to bee regarded, for the simplicitie of the gospell cannot matche with such outward pompe, it was of more credite before their calling was hatched, then ever it was since. *Diotreph.* I hope never to see them overthrown, and I thinke they will never give over their byshopricks. *Paule.* I am of your mind, that they will never give them over, they have such experience of the gaine of them, the use of the bagge prevailed so much with one of their apostles, that rather then hee would lacke money, he would sell Iesus Christ himselfe. *Diotreph.* You speak too unreverently and uncharitablie of these holy fathers. *Paule.* Surely I have so much experience of their impious dealing, that I canne no better esteeme of them in respecte of their places, then of the enemies of God, but as they bee men, I will not cease to pray for them, that God wold open their

magnified as apostolical, but the bishops of the church of England made no better than so many proud Diotrepheses, nay, so many devils; and he of Canterbury (so they speak) is Beelzebub, even the prince of the devils.

N. C. Still you will have all the talk to yourself, and I must hold my tongue. Pray give me leave to enlarge myself a while; for I am blamed, I assure you, very much for saying so little in our last conference.

C. Speak your mind.

N. C. I must ingenuously confess that we cannot accuse you of such speeches as these; but yet you show your great malignity to us other ways. In particular it is very ill taken that you make our ministers guilty of breaking the Oxford Act[k],

eies, that they may see their sinnes, and repent, whiche is the best way to deale charitablie with them."

"Consider well," says the author in his preface, "of the speeches uttered by every partye, and compare them with the practize of the worlde, and then looke what it is, that so hardneth Pandocheus in atheisme, Demetrius in usurye, and Tertullus in papistrie; and you shall (I doubt not) plainely perceive, that the cause of all ungodlines so to raigne in every place, and of the papists so to increase in strength and number, ariseth from our byshops and their unlawfull government: on the other side, looke into the answers that Diotrephes maketh to Paul, and the councel that Tertullus giveth to Diotrephes, and compare them with the practize of the B. in all pointes, and you shall evidently perceive that the cause why the gospel being so long preached, and hath taken so little effect, ariseth from them only, forsomuch as they have weakened the knees of the true preachers, and every way crossed them in all good actions." "The papist," he makes Paul say in the course of the dialogue, "is on the B. side, because he can finde shilter under them to hide his idolatry. The atheist is tooth and naile for them, because by them he enioieth carnal liberty; the man of most notorious life defendeth them, bicause he can from them redeem the corporal punishment of his sins by mony... So that they doe stincke in the nostrels both of God and man, especially in these three last yeeres of their tyrannie, that I doe verily hope their sinne is very neere the heigth, and the Lord in mercie wil ease us of them shortly."

A work very similar in style and title was published by Penry in 1589, entitled, "A Dialogue wherein is plainly laid open the tyrannical dealings of the lords bishops against God's children."—Brook's Puritans, ii. 23.

The 23rd of the charges brought against Cartwright in 1559 was "that he doth know, or hath credibly heard who were the penmen, printers, or some of the disposers of the several libels going under the name of Martin Mar-Prelate, of the Demonstration of Discipline, and of Diotrephes and such like books."—Fuller, C.H. vol. v. 149.]

[k] [The principal provisions of the Act for restraining Non-Conformists from inhabiting in Corporations commonly known as the Oxford or

and the Act against Conventicles[1]. For you make as if they were obliged to keep within that distance from this place which the law prescribes, if they have not taken the oath: and if

five-mile act, passed by parliament while assembled at Oxford through fear of the plague, the royal consent being obtained Oct. 31. 1665, are these, that "whereas divers parsons, and others in holy orders, not having subscribed the Act of Uniformity, have taken upon them to preach in unlawful assemblies, and to instil the poisonous principles of schism and rebellion into the hearts of his majesty's subjects, to the great danger of the church and kingdom. Be it therefore enacted that all such non-conforming ministers shall take the following oath:—

"I, A. B. do swear that it is not lawful upon any pretence whatsoever to take up arms against the king; and that I do abhor that traiterous position of taking arms by his authority, against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him, in pursuance of such commissions; and that I will not at any time endeavour any alteration of government either in church or state."

"And all such person or persons as shall take upon them to preach in any unlawful assembly, conventicle, or meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion contrary to the laws and statutes of this kingdom, shall not at any time from and after the four and twentieth day of March which shall be in this present year of our Lord God one thousand six hundred sixty and five (1666 N. S.) unless only in passing upon the road, come or be within five miles of any city, or town corporate, or borough that sends burgesses to the parliament, within his majesty's kingdom of England, principality of Wales, or of the town of Berwick upon Tweed; or within five miles of any parish, town, or place wherein he or they have since the Act of Oblivion been parson, vicar, curate, stipendiary or lecturer; or taken upon them to preach in any unlawful assembly, conventicle, or meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion contrary to the laws and statutes of this kingdom; before he or they have taken and subscribed the oath aforesaid before the justices of peace at their quarter sessions to be holden for the county, riding, or division next unto the said corporation, city, or borough, parish, place, or town, in open court (which said oath the said justices are hereby empowered there to administer); upon forfeiture of every such offence the sum of forty pounds of lawful English money." &c.

In additional clauses it is "enacted that all such as shall refuse to take the oath aforesaid, shall be incapable of teaching any public or private schools, or of taking any boarders or tablers to be taught or instructed, under pain of forty pounds. Any justices of peace upon oath made before them of any offence committed against this act, are empowered to commit the offender to prison for six months, without bail or mainprise."—17 Car. II. c. 2. Statutes at large, vol. v. p. 575.]

[1] [The Act to prevent and suppress seditious Conventicles, 16 Car. II. c. 4, after reciting in the preamble that the sectaries under pretence of tender conscience had at their meetings contrived insurrections, declares the act of 35 Eliz. c. 1. to be in full force, which condemns all persons refusing peremptorily to come to church, after conviction, to banishment, and in case of

they have, yet not to hold assemblies (without Common Prayer), especially in time of your service. Now it is plain to us, that they are not obliged to keep these laws, so as you would have them. Mark what I say; they do not refuse to obey them; only they cannot do it in your manner. There are two ways, I have heard them say sometimes, of obeying laws; either by doing what they command, or by suffering what they inflict. Now our ministers are content to endure the penalties; choosing to satisfy the laws that way, which is most convenient for themselves.

C. Have you done?

N. C. Yes.

C. Then give me leave to tell you, I do not believe they are so well contented as you pretend. But if they be; they are no better observers of laws than a thief, who is content to be hanged after he hath robbed his neighbours. I doubt

return to death without benefit of clergy. It enacts further that "if any person of the age of sixteen years or upwards, being a subject of this realm, at any time after the first day of July which shall be in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred sixty and four shall be present at any assembly, conventicle or meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the church of England in any place within the kingdom of England, dominion of Wales, or town of Berwick upon Tweed, at which conventicle, meeting, or assembly, there shall be five persons or more assembled together over and above those of the same household;" then any two justices of the peace or the chief magistrate of the place may and shall record the said offence: such a record to be a conviction, entailing the penalty of imprisonment for any term not exceeding three months, or fine of five pounds, for the first offence; for the second ten pounds, or six months imprisonment; for the third one hundred pounds, or transportation for seven years: such as return, or make their escape, to be adjudged felons, and to suffer death without benefit of clergy. Sheriffs, and others commissioned by them, are empowered to dissolve, dissipate and break up all unlawful conventicles, and to take into custody such of those assembled as they think fit. They who suffer such conventicles in their houses or barns are liable to the same forfeitures as the principal offenders. The prosecution is to take place within three months of the commission of the offence. Married women taken at conventicles are to be imprisoned for twelve months, unless their husbands pay forty shillings for their redemption. This act to continue in force for three years after the next session of parliament, and from thenceforward to the end of the next session after the said three years, and no longer. —Statutes at large, vol. v. p. 516—520.]

they are contented both alike, i. e. they hope to escape without punishment; and when they are laid hold on, they submit because they cannot help it. But when that is done, they are still both alike under sin; because it is not the thief's hanging, and your fine and imprisonment, which the prince intends; but the doing that which he commands. If this be neglected, or you do contrary to his laws, you offend God as well as your prince, and are liable to be punished by both.

N. C. There is a wide difference in these things. For God, you know, requires we should not steal; but he doth not lay such commands on us as your laws.

C. He requires you to obey the magistrate; which your apology plainly confesses, while you suppose he is sufficiently obeyed if you suffer the penalties of his laws: which I must tell you is a ridiculous fancy, and makes the magistrate a most barbarous tyrant; who is as well pleased, or takes himself to be as well obeyed, if his subjects be hanged or broken on the wheel after they have done a world of mischief, as if they had been honest and peaceable members of the commonwealth. Away with these absurd doctrines: which suppose all governors to punish the innocent, and all subjects to obey merely *for wrath* and not *for conscience sake.* You had best go and correct St. Paul: or else correct yourselves; believing that you are guilty of a sin when you do not the things which a law not contrary to God's requires, or else the magistrate could have no right to punish you; and that your punishment also is not to free you from the guilt of the first fault, but to prevent a second.

N. C. But this is not all they have to say for themselves. They are men of a tender conscience, whatever you think; and have a great regard to the commands of their governors, nay, think they ought to be obeyed for conscience sake———

C. To what purpose then do they use the former shift?

N. C. Pray let me go on. They confess, I say, that laws should be kept; and yet they are well assured they commit no sin in not keeping those you speak of———

C. They are wonderful men.

N. C. For they are very confident it is his majesty's pleasure that they should take this liberty against the laws.

C. Good sir, take heed what you say. How come you to know his majesty's pleasure? Where did he whisper it so softly that none could hear it but yourselves?

N. C. I was going to tell you, if you would but be patient. We hold, that since his laws are not executed, it signifies his pleasure to allow us this liberty; and we esteem it a sufficient warrant for our present practice: nay, a tacit declaration that he doth not desire the laws should be obeyed. And upon this account you are justly blamed, who being but a private man have expressed greater severity against them than the magistrate himself: for you have charged them with the guilt of sin, when the magistrate doth not so much as punish them. Do you not think the king can dispense with us? And doth he not in effect give us a dispensation when his laws are not executed? Why do you then disallow what he approves of? May not his majesty do what he thinks good?———

C. I understand you well enough, and therefore these repetitions are needless. But I would fain know what warrant they had when they first ventured to act contrary to those laws. What assurance had they, that it might be done without danger to themselves, or dislike to their prince?

N. C. Indeed, I did not think of that.

C. If you cannot satisfy that question, you must acknowledge you have but spun a cobweb in making this excuse; and confess in plain terms that when they broke the ice, and first took this boldness, they were sinners: and now they make one sin the justification of another.

N. C. How so?

C. They first tried whether any notice would be taken of their abiding here, and of their closer meetings contrary to law: and when they found there was none, then they ventured further, and opened their doors more confidently for all comers: and still there being no notice taken of this license they gave themselves, now they make it an argument to justify what they do, and would persuade us it is as good as if they had a license from others for these unlawful practices. So I call them: for you must know further, that the non-execution of the laws is no proof of his majesty's pleasure they should not be observed. For it may be imputed to the negligence of his officers and ministers in the discharge of their duty. But if to serve your

turn you will say it is an argument of his will and not of their neglect, you must unavoidably serve somebody's turn besides your own. In plain English, you must affirm it is his pleasure that the mass should be said, and the papists should take the same liberty and openness in the exercise of their religion that you do in yours. Nay, I do not see why all drunkards, swearers, and blasphemers may not think themselves allowed in their crimes; because little or no notice is taken of any of them. To which I may add, that several persons who think the non-execution of the laws is a warrant to you, yet find very much fault with your meetings in the time of our public assemblies: which is void of all sense if your reason be good; for there is no more notice taken of that, than of your meeting at other times. And yet it is demonstrable that the not punishing your meeting in time of divine service doth not signify his majesty's pleasure to allow it; and consequently your not being punished can never signify his pleasure to indulge you in other matters. For if from thence you can gather that he approves of what you do, then so may we if we list to do the same: and upon that ground may meet in little companies where we please, and leave our churches quite empty. A thing, without all doubt, which his majesty abhors to think of. You yourselves have declared in times past, that it is absurd to think that laws, nay, ordinances of parliament, (even in matters of religion,) should not equally oblige all the subjects of one kingdom. If therefore the laws oblige us, then they oblige you: if they do not oblige you, then they oblige not us neither. We are all alike either bound or free.

But to leave all these considerations; there is something more remarkable, methinks, in this case, that deserves to be remembered above any thing else. And truly I cannot but smile sometimes———

N. C. Why, what is the matter?

C. I was going to say (but the very thought of your old humour hindered me a little) that I cannot but smile to myself when I call to mind, how you shift your principles and change your maxims, according to your interest. There is no weathercock more guided by the wind than you are by this. For it was a fundamental maxim heretofore, I well remember, and obstinately maintained among your party, who now fawn and

flatter, that the law is the king's superior: and that he hath not so much power over it as to be its supreme interpreter: that his oath ties him expressly to observe it; and binds him to see it executed. Upon which score all the kingdom was filled with loud complaints about the non-execution of laws, and of the indulgences granted to several persons who offended against them. For execution, they said, was the life of the law, without which it became vain and useless. This was the bold doctrine current not many years ago, and he was held for a malignant that did not believe it. But now on a sudden we hear you sing a new song in praise of his majesty's gracious indulgence, (for so you will call it,) and withal you earnestly desire the execution of laws may still be suspended; that is, lie dead and become vain and useless. For which alteration I can find no reason but this; that now the indulgence is to yourselves, and then it was to other folk. Then also you thought yourselves able to make the king bow to you, and now your weakness forces you to worship him.

N. C. Where do you find any such maxims? For my part, I have forgot them.

C. I can send you to several books where you may refresh your memory; particularly to the Medicine for Malignants, which tells you, p. 25, that the king hath not power over the law, but the law over the king. But for your greater ease, I will only refer you to one small pamphlet, called Known Laws[m]; in which you shall not fail to meet with more than I have said.

N. C. These, I believe, were the maxims of the state faction.

C. I know no difference between them and your divines in this matter. I am sure Mr. Will. Bridges (who differs from Mr. Will. Bridge as little as their names do) makes none at all: in whom I find a passage so directly opposite to your present opinions about the obligation of the Oxford Act, and declaring so fully the sense of your divines about the king's power, that I must crave leave to mention it.

N. C. I am content to hear it: but you must remember that these were but the opinions of private persons.

[m] ["Knowne Lawes; a short examination of the counsells and actions of those that have withdrawne the king from the governnement and protection of his people, London, printed in the yeare 1643." 8vo. anon. By some zealous republican.]

C. You are mistaken: this man made an answer (published by authority, 1644,) to a book called the Loyal Convert[n], in which he tells the converted gentleman that he "speaks illegally if he say, the king can protect a papist any way." His reason is universal, though his instance be particular; "for whom the law protects not, the king either cannot or ought not to protect[o]." No, he ought not, as he tells us, so much as to require the help of such persons to protect him. For they ought only "to be tributaries, and to hold themselves to their *ubi*, to their place:" which words I would have you apply to that business which begat this discourse. I would fain know of your divines how his majesty's power comes to be so variable at their pleasure. Whence is it that he can dispense with your residence in the *ubi* or place to which you are by the law con-

[n] [The Loyall Convert, a pamphlet which has been attributed to Hammond, though never recognised as his, or included in his collected works, and not alluded to by Anthony à Wood, appeared anonymously at Oxford in 1643, and was reprinted in the following year. In the latter year a reply was published styled "The Loyall Convert (according to the Oxford copy). A convert will be loyall; or some short annotations on this book, by W. Bridges; published by authority," 4to Lond. 1644. There seems to be no means of deciding whether the author was William Bridge, the eminent independent divine, of whom an account is given above, p. 284.

Wood's opinion was in the negative, while at the same time he is in error as to the authorship of works unquestionably belonging to the latter. "This W. Bridges," he says, (speaking of the author of the Wounded Conscience, and Truth of the Times, pamphlets in defence of taking arms against the king,) "I take to be the same with him who wrote some short annotations on the Loyal Convert; but not the same, I presume, with Will. Bridges preacher at S. Dunstan's in the East, London, author of Job's Counsel, and David's seasonable hearing it, serm. before the house of Com. at the public fast, 22 Feb. 1642, on 2 Sam. xix. 5, 6, 7, 8, Lond. 1643. qu. (4to.) and of other things."—Athen. Oxon. iii. 714.

The work has been included in the series of Bridge's collected works recently published, (vol. v. p. 319,) the editors at the same time expressing themselves doubtful as to its authenticity.

The passage from the Loyal Convert remarked upon by Bridge or Bridges is as follows:

"Obj. I. But his majesties army (besides those looser sort of people) consists of numerous papists, the utter enemies of true religion.

Answ. To whom the king hath sworn his protection, from them he may require assistance.

But unto all his people, as well papists as protestants, he hath sworn his protection.—Therefore from all his subjects, as well papists as protestants, he may require assistance."—p. 15.]

[o] [P. 25.]

fined, who could not dispense at all with others, nor release them (no, not for his necessary assistance) from that place to which according to your doctrine they were immovably chained? The law protects both alike, that is, not at all: what is the cause then that he can give you protection, notwithstanding the law, and not them? Mistake me not; it is the furthest thing from my thoughts to call in question the extent of his majesty's supreme power. I only question your principles, who pretend to be no changelings. Answer me this: if the king have a power to give an indulgence, and dispense with the law, why did you so rudely and barbarously clamour against him heretofore, and say the contrary? If he have not, why do you every where seek to justify yourselves in your illegal practices, with a mere shadow and fancy of his indulgence?

N. C. There is a great distance of time between the one and the other, and they have changed their minds upon second thoughts.

C. Very likely: and you believe also, that if presbytery were in its height and glory, his majesty might dispense with the laws of their making as well as with his own; do you not? Alas, good man! you should find, I doubt, to your cost, if things were come to that pass, that no authority could remit the rigour of them. For they have condemned all dispensations and licenses as antichristian. Their decrees are so sacred, that as there lies no appeal from their courts, so none may take authority to relaxate their laws. For they take themselves to sit in Christ's tribunal seat; and so their laws are no more to be dispensed with than his.

But why do I insist so long upon one thing, since there are so many instances of your windings and turnings as your interest leads you? There was a time, I remember, when the parliament was magnified as the only keepers of the people's liberties. We were told[p] that "we might not so much as ima-

[p] Observator on his majesty's Answers, 1642. [The passage referred to appears to be the following; from an anonymous pamphlet entitled, "Observations upon some of his Majesties late answers and expresses:" p. 22. "We had a maxime, and it was grounded upon nature, and never till this parliament withstood, that a community can have no private ends to mislead it, and make it injurious to it selfe: and no age will furnish us with one story of any parliament freely elected, and held, that ever did injure a whole kingdome, or ex-

gine the houses could be injurious, or that a committee should have any private ends to mislead them." And therefore they could not sit too long, nor prove a burden to the good people. But now you are quite in another strain: there is no greater grievance than a parliament; no more intolerable mischief than their long continuance. For which different judgment there is no reason that I can see but this, that then the parliament was

ercise any tyranny, nor is there any possibility how it should." On this passage a contemporary hand has written this note in the copy in the library of the British Museum, "Nor doe wee find in yt parl^{t} wch first begun these warrs, yt they would have iniured either king or people, till ye majority were excluded by force."—This work was published without title-page or date, in the year 1642, reflecting with much severity, from the parliamentary side, on the negotiations which preceded the king's finally setting up his standard, Aug. 25: and reappeared shortly after in "the second edition, corrected from some grosse errors in the presse." The authorship of it has been assigned to Henry Parker, of Lincoln's Inn, an active pamphleteer on the side of the parliament.

It gave immediate occasion to an active and acrimonious controversy, the following tracts issuing rapidly from the press in contravention or defence of its positions.

1. "An Answer to a printed book intituled Observations upon some of his majesties late answers and expresses,"—anon. printed by his majesties command, 4to, Oxf. 1642.

2. "A reply to the Answer, by J. M."—4to, Lond. 1642.

3. An Examination of the Observations, wherein the absurdities of the Observator's positions and inferences are discovered," — 4to, Lond. 1642.

4. "Animadversions upon those Notes which the late Observator hath published upon the seven doctrines and positions, which the king by way of recapitulation (he saith) layes open so offensive," — anon. 4to, Lond. 1642.

5. "Animadversions animadverted, or a reply to the late Animadversions," &c.—4to, n. p. or d.

6. "A View of a printed book entituled, Observations upon his majesties late answers and expresses,"—anon. (by Sir John Spelman,) n. p. or d.

7. "An Answer or necessary animadversions upon some late impostumate observations invective against his majestie, bearing the face of the publick, but boldly pen'd and publish't by a Privado,"—4to, Lond. 1642.

8. "An Appendix to the late Answer," &c.—4to, n. p. 1642.

9. "Christus Dei, the Lord's Anointed, or a theologicall discourse wherein is proved that the regall or monarchicall power of our soveraigne lord king Charles is not of humane, but of divine right, &c. in answer to a late printed pamphlet intituled, Observations,"—&c. 4to, (by John Jones) Oxf. 1642, reprinted 1643.

10. "An Examination of the Observations upon his majesties answers,"—4to, Oxf. 1643.

11. "A Review of the Observations upon some of his majesties late answers and expresses, written by a gentleman of quality," (Sir Dudley Digges) printed at York, by Stephen Bulkley, 1643, "by speciall command."]

for you, and now it is against you. The time was also, as I told you before, when the Commons alone might impose a protestation on all the subjects, under the pain of being incapable of any office if they refused it[q]. But now you will be free from all imposition of this nature; and an oath enjoined by the king and both the houses, under no severer penalty than a small restraint, is looked upon as a grievous oppression. There are those likewise that can remember when the Commons alone put out another order about some of the affairs of religion[r]: but now a law enacted by the king's authority is thought a high

[q] [See p. 452, above.]

[r] [In the month of Sept. 1641, the house of Commons suspended an order made the day before "that the book of Common Prayer should be justly and duly observed," and proceeded to resolve "that the standing of the communion-table in all churches should be altered, the rails (which in most places had been set up for the more decency) should be pulled down; that the chancels should be levelled, and made even with all other parts of the church: and that no man should presume to bow at the name of Jesus (which was enjoined by a canon, and of long usage in the church): and having digested these godly resolutions into an order, they carried it up to the Lords for their concurrence; promising themselves that from the small number which remained there they should find no dissent. But the major part of the Lords being much scandalized, that the house of Commons should not only unseasonably, and irregularly, interpose in a matter of which they had not the least jurisdiction; but should presume to disturb the peace of the church, and interrupt the settled and legal government thereof, by such schismatical presumption; not only refused to join with them, but, instead thereof, directed an order, formerly made by the house of Peers (on the sixteenth of January before) to be printed, to this effect: 'that the divine service should be performed, as it is appointed by the acts of parliament of this realm; and that all such as shall disturb that wholesome order shall be severely punished, according to the law;' and acquainted the Commons therewith: who, nothing satisfied, pursued their former order, and commanding all the commons of England to submit to their direction, declared that the order of the Lords was made by the consent but of eleven lords, and that nine other lords did dissent from it; and therefore that no obedience should be given thereunto. Whereas the order had been made in full parliament seven months before, and was seasonably ordered to be published, by the major part present upon that important occasion. And such an arraigning the house of Peers, for publishing an order in maintenance of the laws established, by those who had no authority to declare what the law was, nor a jurisdiction over those who should infringe the law, was so transcendent a presumption and breach of privilege, that there was great expectation what the lords would do in their own vindication." —Clarendon, p. 117. book iv. par. 8. edit. 1849.]

invasion of Christ's prerogative, and he must not meddle in matters of his worship. The reason is, any thing may be done by any body to advance your fancies, but nothing against them by no creature in the world. Nay, we have not forgotten the time when Mr. Case used this argument, among others, to persuade the people to take the Covenant[s], "because antichrist and his faction had prospered so much by entering into covenants, therefore the people of God should try what this way will do, which hath been so advantageous to the enemy. For God," said he, "may make use of that stratagem to ruin their kingdom, which they used to build it." But now if any of us say that the same persons have maintained a great reverence in the people to their religion, by many stately ceremonies, splendid vestures, and pompous rites, and therefore we may hope to keep the ordinances of God from contempt by a few solemn and grave ceremonies, by decent habits, and such rites and gestures as may beseem the dignity of our religion; presently you raise an outcry against us, and the people are told that we are popishly affected, of an antichristian spirit, and imitate idolaters. For which I can assign no cause but this, that then the argument was for you, and now it makes for us: and you are resolved to serve yourselves by all means, though it be by approving and anon rejecting the very same things.

If a thing like you well, it shall go very hard but you will find some Scripture for it: and if none speak plainly, you will torture and draw some or other to be on your side, and labour to prove that they signify according to your meaning. But if a thing dislike you, then you ask for plain Scripture. Nothing will satisfy, unless we show it you in express terms: it is superstition, will-worship, any thing but good, unless we produce a text in so many words to confirm it.

Of the same shifting humour was the late army, as appears by their unparalleled story, which in brief is this. On the 20th of April, 1653, they turned their masters, whom they had long served, out of doors, as a company of self-seekers, who minded their own private more than the public good[t]. About six years after, finding "the good spirit declining which formerly

[s] Sermons about the Covenant, p. 64. [Referred to above, p. 447.]

[t] [Clarendon p. 792. book xiv. 8. edit. 1849. Whitelocke, 554.]

appeared among them in carrying on the great work," (those are their canting expressions,) and the good old cause itself become a reproach: they were led to look back and examine the cause of the Lord's withdrawing his wonted presence from them. And among other things they remembered what injuries they had done to the remnant of the long parliament, and that they were eminent asserters of that cause, and had a special presence of God with them, and were signally blessed in that work: and therefore invited them, by their declaration of May 6, 1659, (in which you may find these things,) to come and sit again; promising to yield their uttermost assistance for their sitting in safety. Would you not imagine now that they would for ever reverence these eminent, these blessed men; and that to oppose them in their great work would be in their opinion to fight against God, to drive away the good Spirit, and to endeavour to destroy the cause of God?[u] And yet it was

[u] [The irresolution of Richard Cromwell having entirely discouraged his partizans, the council of officers at Wallingford house, Fleetwood's residence, took the resolution of dispossessing him of the government, and being supported by the soldiery very speedily ended his short protectorate. But finding themselves unable to contrive any thing resembling a lawful authority in their own persons, their leaders entered into a treaty with such members of the long parliament as continued to sit after colonel Pride's purge had expelled the presbyterians, and from that circumstance were called the Rump.

The result was a resolution inviting back the secluded members, in terms of the following declaration: "The publick concernments of this commonwealth being through a vicissitude of dangers, deliverances, and backslidings of many, brought into that state and posture wherein they now stand, and our selves also contributing thereunto by wandering divers ways from righteous and equal paths; and although there have been many essays to obviate the dangers, and to settle these nations in peace and prosperity, yet all have proved ineffectual; the only wise God in the course of his providence disappointing all endeavours therein.

"And also observing to our great grief, that the good spirit which formerly appeared amongst us in the carrying on of this great work did daily decline, so as the good old cause itself became a reproach: we have been led to look back and examine the cause of the Lord's withdrawing his wonted presence from us, and where we turned out of the way, that through mercy we might return and give him the glory.

"And among other things calling to mind, that the long parliament, consisting of the members which continued their sitting until the 20th of April 1653, were eminent asserters of that cause, and had a special presence of God with them, and were signally blessed in that work, (the desires of many good people concurring with ours therein) we judge it our duty to invite the aforesaid members to return to the exer-

not long before they were of another mind. They held themselves, for all this, to be the great saints, the army of the living God; and so immutably settled in his favour that they should not lose it, do they what they would. And therefore as soon as ever the parliament refused to act according to their mind, they refused to yield their obedience. When they voted some of their commissions void, and resolved to govern the army by commissioners in stead of a lieutenant-general, these late penitents could see nothing of God any longer among them; the special presence of God vanished, and in a moment disappeared. So that on the thirteenth of the next October they locked up the doors of the house, set themselves once more above their masters, and in an insolent manner declared[x] all their "orders, acts, pretended acts, or declarations (and all proceedings thereupon had or done) on Monday the tenth of that month, and on Tuesday and Wednesday following, null and void to all intents and purposes, in as full and ample a manner as if they had been never done[y]." And immediately after they packed the men away after these acts and orders. Nay, this they did notwithstanding that they had styled themselves several times, but five days before this tenth of October[z], "your faithful ser-

cise and discharge of their trust, as before the said twentieth day of April 1653.

"And therefore we do hereby most earnestly desire the parliament, consisting of those members who continued to sit since the year 1648 until the 20th of April 1653, to return to the exercise and discharge of their trust, and we shall be ready in our places to yield them as becomes us our utmost assistance to sit in safety, for the improving present opportunity, and securing the peace and freedom of this commonwealth, praying for the presence and blessing of God upon their endeavours. —May 6, 1659. Signed by direction of the lord Fleetwood, and the council of officers of the army. Tho. Sandford, secretary."—Whitelocke, 677. Somers' Tracts, vi. 505.]

[x] Declaration agreed at Wallingford house, Oct. 27. [P. 17.—"A declaration of the general council of the officers of the army; agreed upon at Wallingford-house, 27th Octob. 1659."]

[y] [Whitelocke, p. 684. Kennet, Hist. iii. 215.]

[z] Humble Represent. and Petit. Octob. 5. [Pp. 1, 9.—"The humble representation and petition of the officers of the army to the parliament of the commonwealth of England, presented to them Wednesday the 5th of October, 1659, by Maj. General Disbrow, accompanied with the field-officers of the army, and subscribed by above two hundred and thirty commission-officers in and about London: together with the parliament's answer thereunto."]

vants the army;" and professed that "having diligently inquired into their hearts and ways, they found nothing among them but faithfulness and integrity to the parliament;" concluding their address in this manner, that "notwithstanding all endeavours to the contrary, they would, by the help of God, be found faithful to them." Were not these gallant fellows? wonderful constant to their principles and professions? mightily overawed by the presence of God? single hearted, and faithful to their word? Yes, by all means, you must needs say; for of such as these a great part of the churches of the saints is now composed. And faithful they were to themselves; and that was enough: constant to this principle, that they were alway in the right; and what would you have more? They could cant still in scripture language, and therefore God was not withdrawn from them. They could fast and pray still, and had power to turn even the Lord's day into a day of humiliation; and therefore the good Spirit had not forsaken them. They hated antichrist, that is, us; and were resolved to burn the flesh of the whore with fire, and so still remained the army of the Lord of hosts. For as if they had some such work in hand as the apostles had, they call upon all the godly in the nation to say on their behalf, Who are sufficient for these things? and to cry aloud for them before the throne of grace, that the Lord himself would appear, and carry on his work in their hand. And great reason there was to expect it, since they had once more injured those who asserted his cause, and done that very thing for which (as they said) he had before withdrawn his wonted presence from them. O the impudent foreheads of these men! O the sottishness of the people that will be still cozened by such like canters! Will you never open your eyes and see how vain their pretences to the Spirit are? Will you never be convinced of their presumptuous boastings and empty confidence? Will you still believe that these men are highly illuminated, who call that light which a little while ago was darkness; and then cross themselves again and say, no, it is but darkness? Are these the men whom we must all follow; who run, we see, in an endless round of contradicting their own professions? or must we shut our eyes and give them our hand, that they may lead us whither they please? Must we forget all that is past, and believe they are now possessed with an infal-

lible spirit? This is the thing, no doubt, they desire. We must resign our belief to their declarations: we must allow all their reasons and excuses, whatsoever they be: we must at least suffer them to justify themselves by those very things which they formerly condemned; and say never a word. And then we love them; then we favour the people of God; then they have some hopes of us; and it is possible God may have mercy on us, though we be out of the way and do not follow them.

I know you will say, that such as you are none of the army saints: that you condemn their practices, and hate their lewd pretences to religion, as a great scandal to it: all which I verily believe. But, let me tell you, the army had a copy set them of inconstancy and double dealing by those men whom you admired. For there was a time when the Lords and Commons could see some good in the Liturgy and government of the church by law established. Nay, more than that, they made a declaration[a], caused to be printed and published in all market towns, that they would "take away nothing in the one or the other, but what should be evil and justly offensive, or at least unnecessary and burdensome." And yet, when they had more power, they were of another mind. Every thing was offensive, at least unnecessary and burdensome; nothing would serve but taking away all the Common Prayer, and plucking up episcopacy by the very roots. The reason, I suppose, was, because this became as necessary to promote their designs in process of

[a] April 9, 1642. ["Die Sabbati 9 Aprilis, 1642.

"The Lords and Commons do declare, That they intend a due and necessary reformation of the government and Liturgy of the church, and to take away nothing in the one or the other, but what shall be evill, and justly offensive, or at least unnecessary and burdensome: and for the better effecting thereof, speedily to have consultation with godly and learned divines. And because this will never of itself attain the end sought therein, they will therefore use their utmost endevours to establish learned and preaching ministers, with a good and sufficient mayntenance throughout the whole kingdom, wherein many dark corners are miserably destitute of the means of salvation, and many poor ministers want necessary provision.

"Ordered by the Lords and Commons, That this Declaration of both Houses, touching the government and Liturgie of the church, shall be forthwith printed, and published by the sheriffs in their severall counties in all the market towns within the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales.—John Brown Cler. Parl."—[Printed by order, with certain other declarations, in a quarto pamphlet, July 5, p. 7. Lords' Journals, vol. iv. p. 706. Prynne's

time, as that Declaration was at the beginning. If they had rested there, and gone no further, they had lost the hearts of the most spiritual; who would never have seen such a glorious anointing upon them from the Lord as now appeared[b]. Now the very fifth kingdom men could not but see it, and acknowledge it in print: though it was not long before they also changed like all the rest, and had lost the sight of this glory, being able to spy no unction any where but upon themselves. For they helped to profane the crown of these anointed ones, and cast out the greatest part of them, as if they were but scum and filth. But I think it is best to trace your windings and turnings no further, for fear they lead us too far out of the way.

N. C. A good resolution: too much of one thing, you know, is good for nothing.

C. True: and I think the first thing I said about your pretences of a tacit indulgence is sufficient to show that you are perfectly like men in danger of drowning, who catch hold indifferently of what comes next to hand, be it a naked sword or an hot iron.

N. C. Pray make an end of this, for you have quite tired me with your discourse: in which you have largely proved the truth of the common talk, that you are of a harsh, nay, a

Exact Collection, &c. 135. Rushworth, iv. 560. Parl. Hist. ii. 1168.]

[b] Beam of Light by Ch. Feak, [P. 6. "A Beam of Light, shining in the midst of much darkness and confusion: being (with the benefit of retrospection) an essay toward the stating (and fixing upon its true and proper basis) the best cause under heaven, viz. the cause of God, of Christ, of his people, of the whole creation, that groans and waits for the manifestation of the sons of God."—By Chr. Feake, preacher of the gospel of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, 4to, Lond. 1659.

Christopher Feake, of whose origin and life little is known, was at one time a clergyman of the church of England, but afterwards joined the separatists, espoused anabaptist sentiments, and became a violent fifth-monarchy man. On the sequestration of Mr. William Jenkin he became minister of Christ Ch. London, and lecturer at Blackfriars. The protector was the object of his most unsparing denunciations, and was compelled by regard to his own authority to have him arraigned before the privy-council, by whom he was committed prisoner to Windsor Castle in 1653, where he remained four years. The time of his death is uncertain.

Edwards gives an amusing account of him and his eccentric practices in the third part of his Gangræna, p. 147. See also Brook's Puritans, iii. 309.]

bitter and jeering spirit, and was in a choleric mood when you wrote your book.

C. Rather, they that say so prove what I have been saying all this time, that they blow hot and cold out of the same mouth; and condemn that in others which they allow, nay, praise in themselves. For you shall hear them call that salt and smartness of wit in one whom they love, which is bitterness and jeering in him whom they hate. And that passes for innocent mirth and pleasantness in one of their party, which is levity and frothiness in one of ours: nay, it is zeal for God and his cause if you aggravate the faults of other men, or rashly charge and bring even a false accusation against your betters; but it is malignity of spirit, hatred of God and the power of godliness, if we do but tell a plain and true story of your miscarriages. No man ever opposed you resolutely, but you said he railed. No man discovered your partiality and other vices, but you complained of his bitterness, and said he was in a rage against you. If by this you meant nothing else but that I write with some heat and earnestness, I would confess it, and say it is not to be condemned. For who can contend coldly and without affection about those things which he holds dear and precious? A politic person indeed may write from his brain (as my lord Bacon, I think, observes) without any touch or sense on his heart; as in a speculation that pertains not to him: but a feeling Christian will express in his words a character either of zeal or love, which you know are warm passions. For my part, I think I have expressed both; but nothing at all of wrath and bitterness. And therefore, as to that censure which your friends pass on me, I believe he will speak a great deal truer, that affirms the authors of it were full of choler themselves. Otherways they could not but have discerned a charitable spirit in my writing, and easily seen that the indignation I expressed against some vices is such as consists with Christian meekness, and ought not to be condemned as an unmanly passion. Do you not find that *Moses was very wroth,* when Israel committed a great sin? And yet his meekness is commended above all other men's. And what think you of St. Paul, when he calls the Galatians a *foolish* sort of people: and plainly tells the Corinthians that he could as well use a *rod* as the *spirit of meekness;* and bids Titus, whom a

little before he warned against rash anger, to *rebuke* some persons *sharply?* Nay, what think you of our Saviour himself? Was not he angry at the hardness of the Jews' heart? (Mark iii. 5.) Was he in any fault when he said to his disciples, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe?* Undoubtedly I may sincerely and heartily love you when I express a just indignation against you; and you may as heartily hate me when you seem very gentle and kindly affected toward me. It is possible you may have met with this saying out of St. Austin, which is ordinarily cited by our writers, and worth your consideration: "It is so far from being true, that every one that is angry with others hates them, that sometimes he who is not angry is thereby convinced of bearing the greatest hatred to them[b]." And this also: "I am not to account every one my friend that spares and forbears me, nor every one my enemy that severely corrects and lashes me." Besides, there are some of such a nature that nothing but sharp dealing will do them good. They are like "knotty blocks, which require more wedges and harder blows also to drive them home. If he that undertakes (saith Dr. Corn. Burges[c], once famous among you) shall dally, and not strike home with all his might, he shall find the wedge about his shins." They will rage the more confidently when they see he favours them; they will think he fears and stands in awe of them, and so fly in his face with the greater fury. I have never found any thing truer than this; that to speak some men fair is but to make them have a better opinion of themselves. They never thank you for your gentle and tender usage; for they imagine their merit extorts it from you. Whatsoever favour you show them, it is not imputed to your kindness, but their own deservings: and they perk up the higher in their own conceit, because you have such regard to them. That they may know themselves, therefore, they must not be stroked, but smitten; you must not gently jog, but roughly shake them, if you intend to awaken them. If you would not have them sooth themselves up in their sins, you must openly detect and discover them: if you would have them see the greatness of their offences, you must boldly reprove them and

[b] [Serm. lxxxii. tom. v. c. 440 D.]

[c] Fire of the Sanct. uncovered. [chap. 7. p. 395. "The Fire of the Sanctuary newly uncovered, or a compleat tract of Zeale, by C. Burges,"—8vo, Lond. 1625.]

tear in pieces all their pretences and excuses whereby they seek to hide them. And as long as you are truly charitable, and allow all that is good in them, they may see, if they be not perfectly blinded with a too fond love of themselves, that you are a friend to them, though an enemy to their vices. For (to use the words of a famous writer) as the coldest and fiercest winds are observed to grow mild and gentle by passing through temperate regions, so do severe and sharp reproofs partake of the nature of him that gives them: and lose part of their austerity when they are managed with prudence and charity.

It is a very good old saying, "Love thy neighbour, yet pull not down thy hedge." We will be kind to you, but yet make you to know your bounds. We will not suffer you to engross to your party the name and reputation of godliness. You shall not pass for the only nice and tender conscienced men, nor be thought more conscientious than you are. Nor will we suffer you, if we can help it, to pull down the fence that is about our church; those wise and wholesome laws that are made for its safety and security. Too much civility to you doth but make you presumptuous. You only take occasion to grow more bold and licentious, if in some things we commend your strictness, but wink at your faults. And therefore we must tell you your own, (as we commonly speak,) and let the deluded people know how ignorant, how superstitious, how defective you are in a great number of Christian duties; whilst you imagine yourselves the most knowing, the most holy people in the world. If you be angry at this, and call it bitterness, it is no more than I expected from many of you. For a galled horse, I know, loves not to be curried, and a guilty conscience loves not to be reproved. Let us go about the one or the other with never so much caution, they will be sure to winch. Though the necessity be great and our charity much, it is all one; they have no mind to be touched. Now how necessary and seasonable those instructions were that I gave you, I leave others to judge who are impartial. And as for the manner of delivering them, show me any thing in my book that bites but only truth, and I will knock out its teeth: which if you think I have sharpened too much, I assure you it was only to give you a quicker sense of your errors. All the salt you may fancy in it was intended only to season you, but not to fret you at all.

N. C. You can make smooth and handsome apologies for any thing. But study as long as you will to blanch the matter, they will believe your tooth is black: and that your voice indeed may be the voice of Jacob, but your hands the hands of Esau: as hairy and rough as a satyr.

C. You are marvellously witty. And as I have heard you commend a sanctified wit, so it seems there is a sanctified scurrility: and one of you may rail with good approbation, provided he do it in Scripture phrases.

N. C. What ails you, to talk in this fashion? Have I given you any occasion?

C. Since you will not be satisfied, but still complain of bitterness and reproaches, it is fit to let you know, that you of all other men should not speak a word of this; which you have been so notoriously guilty of yourselves. You are perfectly like the friar who declaimed against stealing when he had a pudding in his sleeve———

N. C. Good sir, say no more; for I see the more we stir in this business, the worse it will be.

C. You speak modestly: but let the issue be what it will, you shall give me leave, now we have begun, to spread before you some of the dung that you have thrown in our faces. And I shall the rather undertake it, because it will serve another purpose: for it will plainly demonstrate where your people learnt all their reviling language; and that your ministers have been so far from reproving them for it, that in truth they taught them how to blaspheme, and put those very words into their mouths which now they belch out against us.

N. C. I had rather believe you upon your word than be troubled with such stuff.

C. No, I will not be so much beholden to you. But since you are so good natured, you shall not be troubled with much of it. Let me only entreat you to peruse two or three of your authors. First, there is a book entitled "A Looking-glass for Malignants," writ by one of your ancient ministers, Mr. Vicars[c]; the famous author of your Parliamentary Chronicle, called,

[c] ["A Looking-Glasse for Malignants: or God's hand against God-haters, containing a most terrible yet true relation of the many most fearefull personall examples (in these present times, since the yeere 1640,) of God's most evident and immediate wrath against our malevolent Malignants: together with a caveat for Cowards and unworthy

"God in the Mount[f]," in which he treats our clergy and people with the wonted civilities that your rude people now bestow upon us. He begins with the archbishop of Canterbury, whom he calls a "cursed cow, or rather a raging fat bull of Bashan[g]:" "whose heart," he saith, "was more hard and adamantine than a nether millstone, and most extremely cauterized, yea, stigmatized with the hottest iron of most desperate impenitency." And having thus expressed his respects and charity to him, then he greets our inferior ministers by the name of "Baal-priests, popish sons of Belial:" and makes it an admirable piece of Divine providence, that the soldiers who went against Scotland (before our wars) should have "their hearts overruled by God, and their spirits ordered to plunder and terrify those scandalous Baal-priests[h]." As for the people that followed the king, he calls them "marble-hearted malignants, implacable and inveterate haters of holiness; that were for mere formal protestantism at large, which is in effect downright atheism." This excellent treatise was licensed by Mr. John

(either timorous or treacherous) Neuters. Collected for God's honour, and the ungodlies horrour, by John Vicars,"—4to. Lond. 1643.

Vicars proceeded to publish a continuation of this work: "The Looking-Glasse for Malignants enlarged, or the second part of 'God's hand against God-haters,' &c. Dedicated 'to the right worshipfull the lady Rebeccah Wollaston, the lady Anne Sprignall, and Mrs. Mary Grimstone, a most worthy pair-royall of heroick patronesses of vertue and piety."—4to, Lond. 1645.

John Vicars was born in the city of London in the year 1582, of a Cumbrian family, and educated at Christ's Hospital, afterwards at Queen's College, Oxford. On his leaving the university he received the post of usher at Christ's hospital, which he kept till towards the close of his life. He was an uncompromising presbyterian, and a most furious adversary of the independents, no less than of the royalists and church of England. John Goodwin in particular was the object of his most violent invectives. He died Aug. 12, 1652.—Brook, iii. 143. Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 308.]

[f] [Vicars obtained in 1644 the authority of the committee of the house of Commons on Religion, of which John White was chairman, to publish "Jehovah-Jireh: God in the Mount; or England's Parliamentarie-Chronicle," a summary of public events from the beginning of the long-parliament, together with a second part or continuation, down to October 1643. Two years later he produced a third part, entitled, "God's Arke overtopping the World's Waves," and a fourth and last part, "The Burning-Bush not consumed," carrying on the record to July 1646. In the latter year he caused the whole series to be reissued, under the general title of "Magnalia Dei Anglicana, or England's Parliamentary Chronicle," &c.—4to, Lond. 1646.]

[g] [P. 7.] [h] [Pp. 4, 8.]

White, who was himself such another reviler; and called our ministers by the same names; nay, far worse: not only "priests of Baal," but of Bacchus and Priapus. And though you may imagine he speaks only of those particular men whom he put into his Centuries[i], he will inform you otherwise if you look into his epistle before the first of them: which he put forth, as he tells us, for this end, that the world might see what manner of persons our clergy be. As if there was no difference; but the people were to judge of all the rest by those stories which were told of some. And truly, so they did, and so they do to this day.

N. C. I never observed these things: but you must consider that this Vicars was old, and so might be testy: for no man well advised, sure, would approve of that disorderly action of the soldiers, much less make God the author of it.

C. I remember indeed Mr. Burroughs[k] wonders that so old a professor of religion as he should be found jeering and scorning at it, (for he cast some reproaches on his way,) and can find no excuse for it, but the infirmities that sometime attend on old age. But as for that action of the rude soldiers, I remember very well it is applauded by Mr. Case, in a book licensed by the same Mr. White, June 27. 1642, called, "God's waiting to be gracious[l]," &c.; where he makes this one of their encouragements to expect the fall of Babylon, because

[i] [John White, member for the borough of Suffolk, and chairman of the committee for scandalous and plundered ministers, published in the name of the committee their first report, entitled, "The First Century of scandalous, malignant priests, made and admitted into benefices by the prelates, in whose hands the ordination of ministers and government of the church hath been. Or, a True Narration of the causes for which the Parliament hath ordered the sequestration of the benefices of severall ministers complained of before them, for vitiousnesse of life, errors in doctrine, contrary to the articles of our religion, and for practising and pressing superstitious innovations against law, and for malignancy against the Parliament."—Lond. 1643. The work was not continued further than the first century, and has never been held to carry with it much authority.]

[k] Vindic. against Mr. Edw. Gang. [p. 24. "A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes against Mr. Edwards his foule aspersions in his spreading Gangræna and his angry Antapilogia; concluding with a briefe declaration what the Independents would have. By Jer. Burroughes," 4to. Lond. 1646.]

[l] ["Delivered in certaine sermons at Milk Street in London,"—4to, Lond. 1642.]

" God had so wonderfully wrought upon the spirits of men," particularly on those soldiers who went, he saith, " to fight the bishops' battles in Scotland," that they " pulled down the rails, threatened the priests," and " kept such a visitation in their progress as the bishops hardly ever had done since queen Elizabeth's days." This, he saith, p. 119, was " the finger of God," " the work of him that created the spirit of man."

N. C. You tell me news.

C. It is very stale: but no news at all to us who are well acquainted with their pitiful way of arguing. And I heartily wish your ministers would seriously consider, upon this occasion, these two things. First, how wretchedly they were wont to reason, and how they abused the poor people by encouraging them to draw the greatest hopes from the slightest grounds. For what connexion is there between these two things? The disorderly soldiers were uncivil to our ministers, and profaned our churches as they went into the north; therefore the fall of Babylon is near at hand? It is just like the reasoning of Mr. Henderson, who told the parliament that the fast which they kept on St. John's day[m] was " a presage that by the blessing of God on theirs and the assembly's proceedings the superstition of observing Christmas should shortly expire, and that it was at its last gasp." As if one should say, there was a solemn fast indicted (as they speak) in the church of Scotland on the second Lord's day in Sept. 1642, " for the promoting unity in religion and uniformity in government[n];" and the officers of the army at Wallingford house turned that festival again

[m] Sermon on 27 Decem. 1643. [A sermon (on Ezra vii. 23.) preached to the honourable house of Commons, at their late solemne fast, Wednesday, December 27, 1643, by Alexander Henderson, minister at Edenbrugh, published by order of the house," 4to. Lond. 1644. See p. 31.]

[n] Direct. anent Malignants by the Commis. of Gen. Ass. [Extracted from a pamphlet issued with the authority of the Assembly,—" The true character of such as are Malignants in the kingdome of Scotland, by way of information and direction to the Ministry of that kingdome. Also the Indiction of a publicke fast the third Sunday of February next, and the Thursday following, by the Commissioners of the generall Assembly of the church of Scotland; whereby is showed their zeale to the glory of God, and the fellow-feeling they have of their brethren, the members of Christ's body: lastly, lamenting the present distraction of the church, and kingdome of England."—London, 4to. 1643.]

into a day of humiliation; therefore that solemn remembrance of Christ's resurrection shall shortly cease, and Christianity fall to the ground.

N. C. I am ashamed of the incoherence of such discourses.

C. So should they be too, and do public penance for it; as also for their gross hypocrisy and partiality in assuming a power to themselves, less than which they condemn in other men. For they may turn, it seems, a festival of our Lord's appointing into a fast, but we may not make a festival in honour of him. I would desire them also to consider in the second place, whether their connivance at, nay, their approbation of such things as were done without any authority; I may add, their praising the blind zeal of private men who took upon them to be reformers; and, more than that, their imputing it to the work of the Spirit and the mighty power of God; did not help to embolden the army afterward to do those things which they themselves abhorred; with a persuasion that they were moved by the Spirit, and had a call from the Lord, though no authority from men. It is a thing much to be laid to heart, and then honestly to be confessed, and publicly bewailed. And when we see them so humble and sincere as to take shame to themselves for what they have done, we shall all have the better opinion of them.

N. C. I hope these speeches may be imputed to the rashness of a few men; at least, they were not approved by any authority.

C. Think you so? How came Mr. Wilson's sermon then before the parliament to be printed by their order, Sept. 28, 1642[o]? in which he calls the clergy about the king, "croaking frogs that crept into king's chambers: who are known by

[o] ["Jerichoes Down-fall, as it was presented in a sermon (on Heb. xi. 30.) preached in St. Margaret's, Westminster, before the honourable house of Commons, at the late solemne fast, Septemb. 28, 1642, by Thomas Wilson preacher of the Word at Otham in Kent, published by order from that House." 4to, Lond. 1643. The passage quoted (p. 34.) is taken from the commentary of Paræus on Rev. xvi. 13.

The author, whose character stands high among the preachers of presbyterian tenets, was born at Catterly in Cumberland in the year 1601, and educated at Christ's College, Cambridge. On leaving that university, he taught for some time in a school at Chartwood in Surry, then entered the ministry at Capel in the same county. Afterwards he

the gutter (there he thought lay a jest) whence they come; out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and the false prophet: they are the spirits of devils which go forth unto the kings of the earth to gather them to battle, &c. The frog's head is like their caps, *quadrata ranarum capita.* Here is work for the parliament, that the king may have no more croakers in his chambers."

And here (I may add) is a taste of your sanctified wit, or rather, devout railing; though borrowed, alas! in great part from Paræus on the Revelation.

N. C. You take things in the worse part, when you hear or read our sermons.

C. You would have said, perhaps, if you had read Mr. Vicars, that "to the hearing of the word there came as well ears of scorn as ears of corn." For sure you could not but have remembered such an admirable piece of wit as this, which you may find in his Epistle to the Reader.

N. C. We do not regard wit, nor pretend to it.

C. It is not because you do not love it: for according to the proverb, "John would wipe his nose if he had it."

removed successively to Farlington, near Portsmouth, and Teddington, near Kingston-upon-Thames, where he ministered from August 1626 to April 1631 with exemplary piety and diligence. He next accepted a presentation to the benefice of Otham, near Maidstone, in Kent. In the year 1635 he was suspended from his living by the high-commission court, through the instrumentality of archbishop Laud, for refusing to read the book of sports, and about the same time committed to Maidstone gaol for non-conformity; previously to which he seems to have been brought under the censure of that tribunal, on the occasion of a letter of exhortation written to his parishioners while under sentence of suspension; and later for omitting to read the prayer against the Scots on their irruption into England in the year 1639. By a special resolution of the house of Commons however, Nov. 30. 1640, on his petition, he was declared entitled to relief for his suspension, and set at liberty to return to his cure at Otham. In 1643 he was nominated to the Westminster Assembly, and from Lightfoot's and Goodwin's reports appears to have been a constant and influential attendant at their sessions. He spent his latter days at Maidstone, dying there at the end of the year 1653. By some writers he is represented as of baptist principles, having joined the congregation of John Spilsbury in 1638, possibly through his being confounded with another minister of the same name. No remains of his are known, with the exception of the present and two other sermons. —See his life, anon. 1672. Brook's Puritans, ii. 173. Newcourt, Repert. Eccles. i. 756.]

N. C. There is wit in picking a lock; but it is better to let it alone. And therefore I will not vie proverbs with you.

C. You are just like the gentlemen we are speaking of, who do things and know it not: nay, then do them when they say they will not. Mr. W. Bridges, for instance, reproves the Loyal Convert for ill language, and tells him "he seems in vain to be religious if he refrain not his tongue[p]:" when as he himself had, just before, let his tongue loose in a most riotous manner against us; telling him that "the cathedrals were a nest and cage of all unclean birds, a harbour of dumb dogs, proud prebends, and a crew of ale-swilling singing-men[q]:" and that they "came daily to offer near the holy table the blind whelps of an ignorant devotion; of which one may say, as the apostle, the things which the heathen offer in sacrifice to their idols, they offer them to devils, and not to God[r]." Nay, as if his *tougue* was *set on fire of hell* and could not be tamed, immediately after he had given that caution out of St. James, he falls into a rage again; and in a most nasty manner compares our prelates to swine lying in their ordure. For he saith, "the hogsty-prelatical had been swept but twice since the Conquest, and the Temple of Jerusalem three times in the three years of our Saviour's ministry[s]." What office he designed himself in this sweet work I cannot tell; nor how you will excuse this savoury language, unless it be sufficient to say that he railed by public authority.

N. C. I abominate such reformers; and think they deserved to keep hogs rather than feed the sheep of Christ.

C. I am glad to hear you say so: and hope you as much abhor Mr. Hughes's reproaches, who says, "the Common Prayer may be likened fitly to the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place."

N. C. By what you told me before, I could expect no better from him; whom I think worthy to have been preferred to the same office with the other.

C. But you would expect better language, would you not, from two such holy men as Mr. Allin and Mr. Shepherd, the famous New-England preachers?

N. C. They sure were more conscientious than to utter any foul speeches.

[p] [Annot. on the Loyal Convert, p. 23.] [q] [P. 22.] [r] [P. 23.] [s] [P. 24.]

C. Yet they tell you, "the English Service-book hath stunk above ground twice forty year, in the nostrils of the godly, who breathed in the pure air of Scripture."—"Defence of the nine positions," p. 61[t].

N. C. No more of this noisome language, I beseech you; which is enough to poison the air we breathe in.

C. As it hath done already; and so diffused its venom among your people, that they are generally infected with this plague. Nay, they not only do such things themselves, but take pleasure in them that do them. Witness all the filthy reproaches they bestow upon our divine service, clergy, and people: and

[t] [A series of communications continued to pass for some years after the puritan settlements were formed in America, between the presbyterian ministers of that and the mother country, relating to the rapid development (especially among the former) of independent or congregational principles in church government and discipline. A formal inquiry or protest was addressed to the New-England churches in the year 1636, comprising in nine positions or heads the chief points in which the religious tenets of the new settlers had scandalized their brethren at home. A reply to this was returned in the year 1638, which miscarrying on the way was renewed in the year following. In this they palliate or justify in a moderate tone the differences laid to their charge. It was published, together with certain other pieces growing out of the same controversy, with a preface by Henry Peter:—"Church government and church Covenant discussed in an answer of the elders of the severall churches in New-England to two and thirty questions, sent over to them by divers ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein; together with an Apologie of the said elders in New-England for church-covenant, sent over in answer to Master Bernard in the yeare 1639; as also in an Answer to nine positions about church-government: and now published for the satisfaction of all who desire resolution in those points."—4to, Lond. 1643.

In reply to the last named Answer, John Ball, pastor of Whitmore, forwarded to the ministers of America "A Tryall of the New Church-way in New-England and in Old," denouncing the independent doctrines which they had laboured to justify. This piece was published after his death by William Rathband and Simeon Ash, 4to, Lond. 1644.

In the year 1645, John (or Thomas, the name in the title-page not corresponding with that subscribed to the preface,) Allin of Dedham, and Thomas Shephard of Cambridge in New-England, continued the controversy in the work here referred to:—"A Defence of the Answer made unto the nine questions or positions sent from New England, against the Reply thereto by that reverend servant of Christ, Mr. John Ball, entituled A Tryall of the New church-way in New-England and in Old; wherein, beside a more full opening of sundry particulars concerning liturgies, power of the keys, matter of the visible church, &c. is more largely handled that controversie concerning the catholick visible church; tending to cleare up the old-way of Christ in New-England churches." It is dated New-England, Nov. 28, 1645,

the great satisfaction and applause wherewith the late cobbler of Gloucester's writings were entertained, even by those whom you esteem religious[u]. This shows what manner of spirit you are of, and that your people are in danger to deprive themselves of all sense of true religion: to pave their own hearts and make them like the highway, through which all things may pass without any difference, (save only a few innocent ceremonies,) even whole cart-loads of dung and filth. And of the very same spirit, I must tell you, this sort of religious people have ever been. For Martin-Mar-prelate, with whose devil this man was possessed, was received with the like applause; and his writings so thumbed, that they were even "worn out with continual reading and handling of them." If you will not believe me, yet I hope you will trust Mr. Brightman[x], whose words these are;

but does not seem to have been published till 1648.]

[u] [Ralph Wallis had recently before this produced a scurrilous dialogue, entitled, "Room for the Cobler of Gloucester and his wife: with several cartloads of abominable, irregular, pitiful, stinking priests; as also a demonstration of their calling after the manner of the church of Rome; but not according to Magna Charta, the rule of the gospel. Whereunto is added a parallel between the honour of a lord bishop and the honour of a Cobler; the Cobler being proved a more honourable person: printed for the author, 1668." It is full of the foullest abuse of the bishops and clergy by name, and concludes with the fictitious *imprimatur:* "Perlegi hunc tractatum, cui titulus 'Room for the Cobler of Gloucester and his wife,' in quo nihil reperio veritati, aut malis moribus contrarium: Imprimatur, Ralph Wallis."

Some account of him appeared shortly after his death, entitled, "The life and death of Ralph Wallis, the cobler of Gloucester; together with some inquiring into the Mystery of Conventicleism: printed by E. Okes, for William Whitwood,"—4to, Lond. 1670.]

[x] [Thomas Brightman was born at Nottingham in 1556, and educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, of which society he became fellow. On leaving the university, he was presented by Sir John Osborne to the rectory of Hawnes in Bedfordshire, where he spent the remainder of his life in literary pursuits, and close application to his pastoral duties. He perpetually predicted the fall of the episcopal government, which he declared, says Fuller, would shortly come down. In study he was indefatigable, always carrying with him his Greek Testament which he read through regularly once a fortnight; and by Cartwright he was designated as the 'bright star in the church of God.' He died suddenly, while on a journey with his patron Sir John Osborne, Aug. 24, 1607.

His Commentary on the Revelation, in which he accommodated the Apocalyptic visions with great hardihood to the events of the age, created a great impression at the time; though like most speculations of its class it is far more calculated to evince the ingenuity of the interpreter than to develope the real meaning of the inspired writer.

"In that book," to use the words

as you may see if you look into his comments on the third Rev. 17, p. 49, of the English edit.[x] where speaking of the nakedness of Laodicea, (i. e. in his opinion the church of England,) he makes this an argument of it, that this man had poured such great contempt and shameful reproach upon it, which is the meaning of her being *naked*. "There was one," saith he, "that called himself by the name of Mar-prelate, who set forth a book wherein he dealt somewhat roundly with the angel. How were those bitter jests of his favoured among the people! How plausible were they in a manner to all men! How willingly and greedily, with what great mirth were they every where entertained! There is none so rude and unskilful but pondering that time in his mind would say thus to himself, and that not without cause, Truly the Lord hath poured out contempt upon princes; those that honour him doth he honour, and those that despise him shall be despised. He hath made our priests contemptible to the whole people because they have broken their covenant." You may read what follows there if you think good: for it is a great demonstration how well those people were instructed in the Christian religion, and what rare devices you have been taught to blind your eyes that you may not see your sins. For you may *speak evil*, and *rejoice in iniquity*, and sport yourselves in *beholding your father's nakedness*, and fancy all the time that you are fulfilling prophecies, executing the judgment written, and pouring out vials, like so many angels.

N. C. I should think rather this was the devil with his followers, fighting against Michael and his angels.

C. And a devil it was, whom when you had once raised you could never conjure down again, nor with all your prayers and fastings dispossess him. Nay, this foul spirit grew in time so

of Granger, (Biogr. Hist. vol. i. p. 161.) "he makes archbishop Cranmer the angel having power over the fire, the lord Cromwell the angel which came out of the temple of heaven, having the sharp sickle, and the lord treasurer Cecil the angel of the waters, justifying the pouring out the third vial. The church of England is the lukewarm church of Laodicea, and the angel that God loved is the antiepiscopal church of Geneva, and that of Scotland, and the power of the prelacy is Antichrist." "In the reign of Charles I." he adds, "when the bishops were expelled the house of Peers, and several of them imprisoned, Brightman was cried up for an inspired writer; and an abridgement of his work, entitled, 'The Revelation of the Revelation' was published in 1644."]

[x] [4to, Amst. 1644.]

outrageous, that he flew at last in a foaming manner in your own faces. Which is a thing so remarkable, that I cannot but put you in mind of it: how you were served in your kind, and felt the tongues of men sharpened against yourselves, which you had whetted to wound the reputation of others. No sooner had you pulled down the bishops, whom you had laid low before by such fellows as that Martin Mar-prelate; but out comes Martin Echo which returned all those reproaches upon presbytery[y]. Baal, Babylon, Egypt, and all the rest of those heathenish names were pressed to war against you, which you had made to serve against us. Presbytery was called "a limb of antichrist;" a "tyrannical lordly government;" a "worse bondage than that under the bishops;" a bondage under task-masters like those over Israel in Egypt[z]. Nay, that very mouth which reviled our church now reviled your intended reformation. Mr. Burton himself, whom your people had so much admired, and brought home with such joy and triumph, that you fancied (as I shall tell you before we have done) that day to be the resurrection of the witnesses[a], bestowed those censures on presbyterial government; which he said[b] would

[y] [Not long after the establishment of the presbyterial government appeared the following pamphlet, without author's name or date, but about the year 1645; "Martin's Eccho; or a remonstrance from his holinesse reverend young Martin Mar-priest, responsive to the late sacred synoddicall decretall; in all humility presented to the reverend pious and grave consideration of his superlative holinesse sir Symon Synod."

It is enumerated by Edwards among a number of similar works which he calls upon the civil authorities to have burnt by the common hangman.—Gangræna, part i. p. 171.

Edwards further relates it as the 143rd of the errors of the time, that "the presbytery and presbyteriall government are the false prophet, and the beast spoken of in the Revelations. Presbytery is a third part of the city of Rome, yea, that beast, in Revel. xi. that ascends and shall kill the two witnesses, namely the independents,"—p. 32; from Paul Hobson's Discovery of truth, p. 63.]

[z] [John Turner's Heavenly Conference for Sion's Saints (12mo, Lond. 1645,) compares the Directory to the golden calves of Jeroboam.—Quoted by Edwards, pp. 36, 53.]

[a] [Prynne, Burton and Bastwick entered London amidst public rejoicings, Nov. 28, 1640, after their cruel punishment. See "A New Discovery of the Prelates' Tyranny," &c.—4to. Lond. 1641; Clarendon, p. 80; Baillie's Letters, i. 222; Nalson, i. 570.]

[b] Dialogue called Conformity, Deformity. ["Conformitie's Deformity, in a Dialogue between Conformity and Conscience, wherein the main head of all the controversies in these times, concerning church-government, is asserted and maintained; as without which all re-

"bring us under perpetual slavery, worse than either Egypt or Babylon." And in the very same terms wherein you had railed against our priests[c], we heard the sectaries railing against your presbyters; whom they called, "Romish bloody priests, black coats, diviners and soothsayers, croaking frogs, the devil's agents, pensioners to the accuser of the brethren." Nay, the Assembly itself, we were told, "had two horns like a lamb, but a mouth like a dragon, teaching the parliament to speak blasphemy against the saints that dwell in heaven." Your uniformity also was as much disgraced as ours, and styled "the burden of the saints, the bondage of the church, the straitening of the Spirit, the limiting of Christ, and the eclipsing of the glory of the Father[d]." Nay, it is pretty to observe how the very *mystery of iniquity* you had so long complained on was now found working among you. Uniformity, Mr. Saltmarsh said, was a piece of it: and Mr. Dell (in his epistle before his sermon "Of Right Reformation," preached before the parliament) calls presbytery a "new form of that mystery of iniquity," which had been so long a working[e].

formation is headlesse, and all reconciliation hopelesse: dedicated by Henry Burton to the honour of Jesus Christ, as the first-fruits of his late recovery from death to life: as a testimony of his humble and thankfull acknowledgement of so great a mercy: and published for the service of all those that love the Lord Iesus Christ in sincerity."—4to, Lond. 1646. p. 21.]

[c] [See part i. pp. 379, 408, above.]

[d] Edw. Gangr. 1 part. [Postscript, p. 180. The passage forms the third of four errors supplementary to the 176 he had previously enumerated. It is extracted from a pamphlet by William Dell, "Uniformity examined whether it may be found in the Gospel, or in the practice of the churches of Christ," 4to, Lond. 1646.]

[e] [In the epistle to the reader prefixed to his sermon, which is entitled, "Right Reformation, or the Reformation of the church of the New Testament represented in Gospel light, in a Sermon (on Hebr. ix. 10.) preached to the honourable House of Commons, on Wednesday November 25, 1646; together with a reply to the chief contradictions of Master Love's sermon preached the same day: all published for the good of the faithful, at their desire, by William Dell, minister of the Gospel, attending on his excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax."—4to, London, 1646.

Dell was eminent among the baptist ministers of the time of the civil wars. He was educated at Cambridge, and held the living of Yeldon in the county of Bedford, worth about two hundred pounds a year, a large income in those days. About the year 1645 he became chaplain to the army, constantly attending Sir Thomas Fairfax, and preaching at head quarters. In 1649, when numbers were expelled from the universities for refusing to take the oaths to the republican government, he was made master of Caius col-

The beast, they held, had only changed its shape and taken another name[f], and so they baited it most fiercely, as you had taught them; and told you in effect what the proverb says, that goose, and gander, and gosling, are three sounds, but one thing. But they would not part with you thus, for after they had done with this, then they fell upon your darling, the solemn league and covenant. This became "a brand of infamy, a Cain's mark almost (as Mr. Case tells us[g]); so that if they would stigmatize a man to purpose, they would say, He? he is a covenanter." As you had told us that we made an idol of the Common-Prayer[h], so Mr. Peters told you publicly in a sermon at the three Cranes[i], that you "kept such a stir about the covenant, as if you would have the people make an idol of it." Mr. Feak also called it the "great idol of the two kingdoms[k]." And so fit had this word been found to do service, that at last one told us you had got two idols for our one.

lege, which he held with his living at Yeldon, till he was ejected in 1662 by the act of uniformity.

Calamy has called him "an unsettled man," and his character has been bitterly attacked for many apparent inconsistencies between his professions and conduct, which Crosby the historian of the baptists labours to extenuate, (i. 323—333.) He was a strenuous advocate for liberty of conscience, and an opponent of the compulsory uniformity sought to be enforced throughout the kingdom by the presbyterian party.]

[f] [He uses similar expressions in his tract before cited, "Uniformity examined,".. "that peece of the mystery of iniquity, which in after ages should be called uniformity."]

[g] Thanksgiving sermon for taking of Chester, p. 26. [See p. 444. above.]

[h] [See p. 370, above.]

[i] [On Sunday evening, May 31, 1646, as Edwards asserts in the first part of his Gangræna, p. 121. The meeting-house known by the sign of the Three Cranes was situated in Fruiterers' Alley. Thames St., the west end of which fell into the lower part of Queen St. Cheapside. Edwards mentions elsewhere, (part i. p. 71,) that a lecture was established there in his time every Sunday evening. A congregation was in the habit of assembling there for worship on independent principles during the period of the commonwealth, of which Hugh Peters was perhaps only occasionally minister. In the early part of the reign of Charles II, the office was filled by the eminent independent preacher Thomas Vincent, who ministered there all the time of the great plague in 1665. He died in the year 1678, and his successor is not known. The old house having been destroyed by fire, another building was erected on the site in 1739, under the ministry of Mr. John Hill. The society dissolving in 1798, the fabric passed into the hands of a body of Calvinistic methodists.—Wilson's Dissenting churches in London, ii. 67. In the course of recent alterations the chapel has ceased to exist.]

[k] [Beam of Light, p. 13. See p. 483, above.]

For the parliament and the pulpit, said an outlandish gentleman[1] (imitating the language of the times) "are the two great idols of the people, the greatest that ever were." For it is held a kind of blasphemy to speak against the one, and the whole body of religion is nailed to the other. It comes to my mind also, how you who joined in the outcries against malignants, were numbered in conclusion among them, and said to be grown indeed to a more refined malignancy; but that there was no greater difference between a presbyter and a prelate, than between a half crown piece and two shillings and sixpence. And as your good friend Mr. Vicars had told us, that God had made us to be "the very drudges and scul-boys of his church and children;" so Mr. Peters in good time told you (in a pamphlet of his) that "the presbyterians were no better than Gibeonites, who might help to hew stone and square timber for a more glorious building."

N. C. Will you never have done?

C. You must let me remember you what a mighty clamour you raised against the bishops, as if they had been so many Ishmaels that persecuted God's Isaacs: and you have not forgot, sure, how oft you were called yourselves "the carnal seed, the fleshly children, the persecutors of the children of the free woman." For your ministers that accused the bishops (and made it a main part of their remonstrance to the house of Commons in the beginning of the wars[m]) that they had put some who were but serving-men into orders, and made them ministers, saw in a little time a whole swarm of vile creatures (nothing so good as serving-men) making themselves ministers, and setting up for the most gospel preachers. And there was no remedy; but all their preaching, and printing, and petitioning against it was despised. These taught the

[1] Letter to Card. Barber. ["A Venice Looking-Glasse, in a letter written very lately from London to Rome, by a Venetian Clarissimo to Cardinal Barberino, protecter of the English Nation, touching these present distempers; wherein as in a true mirrour, England may behold her owne spots, wherein she may see, and fore-see her follies pass'd, her present danger, and future destruction. Faithfully rendered out of the Italian into English, dated London this 16th of August, *stylo loci*, 1648," by James Howell, historiographer royal.]

[m] [See the "Remonstrance of the state of the kingdom," presented to the king at Hampton Court, Dec. 1, 1641, in Rushworth, p. 438. Clarendon, 126. Prynne's Collection, 3. Nalson, ii. 692. Parl. Hist. ii. 943.]

people to call them *blind guides*, as they had taught them to call our priests. Nay, their masters at last encouraged and rewarded the scoffs of those that said, "these blind guides, travelling as they thought to Sion, are fallen into the ditch in the Isle of Wight." "Insatiable hirelings, Gehazies, cheaters, pulpited divines," and a great lurry of such like names were liberally dealt to them; as you may see, if you will not believe me, in their own complaint called A Seasonable Exhortation, p. 11[n]. Nay, the army itself, which had been so instrumental in all this wickedness, and magnified by these revilers as the "army of the Lamb," at last heard themselves called the "abomination of desolation." All which I mention only for this end; to show what your ministers got by instructing the people in this easy art of disgracing all they disliked with the names of "antichristian, Babylonish," and such like. As they had done, so they were requited: and while the episcopal clergy silently bore the punishment of their sins, they that had cast out their names as abominable were whipped with their own rods. When they thought to reign as kings without us, immediately they were assaulted as Egyptian tyrants: when they expected all should bow to the sceptre of Christ in their hand, they saw men rising up against them as antichristian. Those that had heard their invectives against us employed them against themselves: and all the dung they had laid at our doors was flung by those that had been their followers in their own faces. If I were endued with the spirit of Mr. Vicars, or Mr. Case, I should have said upon this occasion, "Behold the finger of God! the work of him that created the spirit of man! See how the Lord overruled men's hearts, and ordered their spirits to terrify these presbyters!" Or Mr. Brightman would

[n] [Among the "great dangers" to which the ministers in London call the attention of their congregations the following is specified:—

6. "The pouring out by men of all sects with a full mouth all manner of obloquies and contempt upon ministry, and ministers of the Gospel; openly interrupting them in the very exercise of their ministerial duty, whereby they are discouraged and obstructed in their work, while they are represented to the world under the notions of Baal's priests, insatiable hirelings, Gehazis, cheaters, pulpited divines, distributers of Sunday's doles, simonious decimating clergy, common incendiaries, and cloathed with the livery of other such revilings; and all this to render whatever they shall say for the vindicating of truth and reforming of manners, useless and ineffectual:"—p. 11. This Exhortation is referred to above, p. 449.]

have taught me to say, "The Lord hath made your priests contemptible to the whole people, because they have broken their covenant." But I dare not imitate their boldness, nor talk as if I was infallible. I will let them enjoy this particular gift to themselves, of knowing what God doth upon the spirits of men. For my part, I think they might be able to say all this, even without any extraordinary help of the devil. There was no need that Beelzebub should come to inspire them with his fury; for they were already possessed with a mighty rage. That spirit which spoke out of the press and pulpit had abundantly furnished them with this powerful and taking rhetoric. And if Mr. Brightman had lived to that day, he would have wondered to see how near of kin his heat was to this fire. Nay, he would have been ashamed of his rare way of reasoning against our church, when he had heard some retort his words against us upon the Philadelphians (I mean disciplinarians), saying, "Truly the Lord hath poured contempt upon princes; those that honour him doth he honour, and those that despise him shall be despised."

"And thus I have at last opened this rotten ulcer" (I hope you will not be angry if I use his words[p]). "If my labour shall be acceptable, and the sore being purged be healed again, how great thanks shall I return to God! But if the evil shall be only stirred up, and the handling of it shall offend the sick and sore parties; I will yet comfort myself with the conscience of the good discharge of my duty, and with the ordinary reward of a physician."

N. C. Discharge of your duty! you should say disgorging your choler and gall. Nay, they will never believe if they hear what you now discourse, but that you wrote out of mere malice, on purpose to disgrace them; and that you deserve the reward of such physicians as kill more than they cure.

C. How came they by this faculty of searching the heart?

N. C. How came you to ask this question?

C. I forgot myself. Since they can see what God doth in the spirits of men, no wonder they can spy our thoughts and intentions.

N. C. I meant that they can see by your book what your intentions were.

C. So they may. For I told them plainly in my preface

[p] In Rev. iii. 17. latter end. [p. 49.]

that I intended only to awaken them to see their errors; but it seems their spirit looked into mine when I wrote those words, and could see my thoughts better than myself. Hath W. B. or his disciples had some revelations about this matter?

N. C. None but what they received from your book, which contradicts, they think, your epistle, and declares the hatred you bear to them.

C. To their schismatical spirit, you should have said. For I can sincerely profess, as Mr. Edwards doth in another case[q], that "I have no personal quarrel with any of them; no old grudge, or former difference; and therefore, had not truth constrained me, I had, out of respect and love to some of them, forborn to say any thing of these matters.... And therefore let not my book by reason of its truth and plainness be branded for a bitter, railing, and malicious writing: but let them consider that they need such a book as doth not flatter and extol them, but be plain and free with them. For the truth is, (as he goes on,) they have been too much flattered, both in their persons and churches; and are undone for want of being plainly and freely dealt withal. A candle hath been too long held to them; I hope my book may do them much good, to abate their swelling and confidence. And if many of our ministers would deal more plainly with them, it would be better both for them and us." I remember a passage concerning Luther in an epistle of Calvin's to Melancthon, (they are still the same man's words,) which, the persons being changed, may be fitly applied to my purpose. "If there were that mind in us all that ought to be, perhaps some remedy might be found. And certainly we transmit an unworthy example to posterity, while we cast away all liberty, rather than offend a few men. Will not their vehemency rise and grow the more, while all bear with them, and suffer all things from them[r]?" Undoubtedly it will. Our base silence doth but make them open their mouths wider to declaim against us. We cherish their insolent behaviour, while we make no opposition and give no check to their violence. They imagine we allow them to be so worthy as they fancy

[q] Pref. to Antapolog. ["Antapologia: or a full answer to the Apologisticall Narration of Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Nye, Mr. Sympson, Mr. Burroughs, Mr. Bridge, members of the Assembly of Divines, &c. humbly also submitted to the honourable houses of Parliament, by Thomas Edwards, Minister of the Gospel."—4to. Lond. 1644.]

[r] ["Verum si in nobis omnibus esset is animus qui esse debet, ali-

themselves, while we sit still, and only see and hear their folly. And therefore, to show that we know them, not that we hate them, I took the freedom to write those things which you accuse of malice.

N. C. But, as I told you, they tend to their disgrace.

C. No man ought to think himself disgraced by truth, nor reproached by just reproof. He should rather think he dishonours himself a thousand times more by still persisting in his errors, and justifying his faults. And if you resolve upon this course, and seek rather to cast reproaches on us than amend yourselves, I doubt not it will turn at last to your greater disgrace, and make you more vile in the esteem of all indifferent men.

N. C. Assure yourself you had better have been otherwise employed, and never have meddled in this business.

C. I am not afraid of any evil tongue, nor of any thing else that man can do unto me: but, as your Mr. Cartwright once said, am of Alcibiades his mind; who trusting to the power of truth, when one lift up his staff ready to smite him if he would not hold his peace, boldly replied "Smite me, so thou wilt but hear me."

N. C. No, they will not smite, but they will defend themselves.

C. With all my heart. But be you assured, as he said in another case, their heels will sooner ache with kicking against the prick, than it suffer any hurt by receiving their broken and strengthless resistance.

N. C. You are very warm and confident.

C. To tell you the very truth, I have long observed in the fiery men that oppose our church a strange pride and conceit of the godliness of their own party, beyond all reason; together with a most shameful despisal of us, as if our piety were little or none at all. This moved my indignation; and it will stir, I think, the spirit of any honest and cordial Christian, to read such haughty censures as these from the mouth of your most famous divines; "that the bishops are a generation of the earth, earthly, and savour not the things of God[s]." They are

quod forsan remedium posset inveniri. Et certe fœdum exemplum transmittimus ad posteros, dum omnem libertatem sponte malumus projicere, quam ut hominis unius animum offensiuncula aliqua pungamus. At est vehemens ingenium, et impetus habet violentos. Quasi vero hæc vehementia non magis exultet, dum omnes illi indulgent, atque omnia permittunt."—Calvin. ad Melancthon. dat. Genev. 24. Julii, 1514. p. 33.]

[s] Preface to the Dioces. Trial.

the words of Mr. Paul Bains, approved by no less man than Dr. Ames, who is pleased to add, in his great modesty, that

An. 1621. [" George Downame or Downham, bishop of Derry, having preached and published a sermon at the consecration of Dr. James Montague to the see of Bath and Wells, April 17, 1608, was attacked in the first instance by a nameless antagonist, the controversy with whom extended over six years. In the year 1621 appeared " The Diocesan's Tryall, wherein all the sinews of Dr. Downam's Defence are brought into three heads, and orderly dissolved, by M. Paul Baynes;" a posthumous work (Baynes having died in 1617), published with a preface by an anonymous hand. It was reprinted in 1641; and appeared again "with authority" in 1644, the same prefatory epistle having attached to it the writer's name, 'W. Ames.'

From Clark's notice of Baynes, appended to his Martyrology, p. 22, it appears that he was a native of London, educated at Withersfield in Essex, and later at Christ's College, Cambridge, where his conduct was at first excessively irregular. On his conversion and amendment he was chosen fellow of his college, and lecturer at St. Andrew's church in that city; becoming exemplary for his piety and assiduity in his sacred calling. The famous Dr. Sibbs is said to have ascribed his conversion to Baynes' instrumentality. The present work, together with some others attributed to him, were produced while he was under sentence of suspension from his lecture for non-conformity and favouring conventicles. He died in 1617.

Ames was a puritan divine of considerable reputation, the author of works on the Arminian, Romish, and Socinian controversies, morality and casuistry. He was a member of Christ's College, Cambridge, where he imbibed strong Calvinistic opinions. About the year 1610–11, a sermon of his gave great offence, according to Fuller, who relates that "Mr. Ames, preaching at Cambridge, or 'having the place of a watchman for an hour on the tower of the university', inveighed against sundry practices of the time, especially against the custom of lords of misrule, then kept up in some colleges, a pagan custom, which Polydore Virgil had observed remained only in England." He equally condemned cards and dice, stating that "as God invented the one and twenty letters, whereof he made the Bible, so the devil, saith our author, found out the one and twenty spots on the die:" that the " canon law forbids the use thereof, seeing *Inventio diaboli nulla consuetudine potest validari, &c.*" Fuller says that on account of the offence thus given, "the rather because there was a concurrence of much non-conformity," he was compelled to leave the university. In 1613, being then chaplain at the Hague, he held and published a disputation or dispute with Grevinchovius, a divine of Rotterdam, on the subject of the Arminian doctrines of election and grace, &c. He afterwards occupied for twelve years the divinity chair at Franeker in Friesland. In 1618 he attended the synod of Dort, and informed king James' ambassador of the proceedings of that Assembly. A severe attack of asthma compelling him to relinquish his professorship, he repaired to Rotterdam, and formed the design of visiting New England. This however was frustrated by his death. He was buried at the former place, Nov. 14, 1633, aged fifty seven years.—Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary; Brook's Puritans, ii. 405.]

there was as much agreement between them in their management of religion (except two or three) and their powerful preachers,...as between the light which comes down from heaven, and that thick mist which arises from the lowest pit." And that " there is more of God and his religion in some one congregation of a silenced minister, than in all the bishops' families in England." I appeal to all the world, whether I had not reason to stomach these proud vaunts, and scornful speeches: and whether it was not absolutely necessary to let you see the emptiness and flatness (to say no worse) of those men who now insult over us in like manner; and would bear the world in hand that they are the only powerful preachers, who alone favour the things of God.

N. C. You have only culled a few sayings out of one or two books———

C. They should have thanked me for that: and might have seen if they pleased, by that moderation, that I was not desirous to publish their shame more than needs; but studied their amendment by disclosing a little of their folly and concealing the rest. If they will not believe but that I did my worst, and revealed all I knew; let them but signify this distrust of my charity, and I shall give them abundant satisfaction. Mr. T. W., I am sure, hath no cause to complain, who with so much labour brings forth childish fancies, and is so curious to speak absurdly, and takes so much care to avoid serious and solid sense in the most weighty arguments, that his great pains is conspicuous in these defects. Of this I did but give a small taste, and that not out of the worst of his conceits; which he ought to look upon as the civility of a friend, and not as the want of skill in an enemy. As for Mr. W.B., I confess ingenuously I said a little the more of him, because you have been so long gulled by such pretenders to mysteries and spirituality. Yet I do not think I said enough, but ought to have told you plainly, that he is one of the principal impostors that have perverted the truth as it is in Jesus, and adulterated the Christian religion in this nation. He spoils almost all the Holy Scripture he meddles withal; and turns it into an idle tale of these times, and makes it say whatsoever it pleases him and his proselytes to hear. Which when I seriously consider, I cannot but say, with a little alteration, as one

doth on another occasion to his countrymen: "that it is a shame there are laws against those who counterfeit coins, and falsify merchandises; yet such are permitted who sophisticate our divinity, and corrupt the Holy Scriptures, and turn our religion into a new fancy and device of their own. The late great plague is but of small consideration in compare with this mischief; and if speedy order be not taken, the multiplying of such authors will make a library as big as London, wherein there shall scarcely be found one wise sentence or reasonable conceit."

N. C. It is thought, sir, by some that you are much mistaken in making him the author of that book which you reprove, since it bears only the two first letters of Mr. Bridge his name. And I have heard you blamed for charging him with those things which he hath not owned.

C. I think rather those apologists are mistaken. For why doth he not disown it, if it be not his book; since it contains such dangerous things? Or why did not the Preface to another book, since stolen into the world, and carrying his name in the front of it, inform us that this was the genuine, and the other spurious? But if he had, there are very few that would have believed him. For they are as like each other, as two pieces of cloth that are of the same wool, the same thread, the same colour, working and breadth. There is the very same canting in both; the same abuse of Holy Scripture, the same spiritual pride and contempt of others, the same evil speaking and seditious doctrines; and in one word, the way and spirit of Mr. Bridge.

N. C. Why do you jeer? I know you allude to the title of one of those ten sermons, which he calls the Way and Spirit of the New Testament[t].

C. I do so; and am better able to describe his way and spirit than he to set out that.

N. C. I think you had better forbear such comparisons.

C. Pray let me try a little. It will both divert us awhile, and not prove unprofitable. Turn, I pray you, to the fifth sermon, at your leisure; and tell me, when you have compared our conceits, whether of us do better.

[t] P. 371, &c. [Christ and the Covenant, serm. v. Works, vol. iii. p. 80, &c.]

First, I say, the way and spirit of Mr. Bridge is not (as he would have it) a childlike, but a childish spirit. A way and spirit that hath nothing manly, nothing of the ancient Christian sense and spirit in it; but abounds with phrases, trifling observations, and perpetual tautologies: and yet thinks itself most gorgeously bedecked with "gospel truths, dispensations, manifestations, discoveries," and I know not how many other glorious things besides.

Secondly, it is not a fearing, but a fearless spirit; daring to talk of God and our Saviour in the boldest and rudest terms, taking a kind of pride in inventing new and monstrous expressions, and spiritualizing religion into airy fancies.

Thirdly, the way and spirit of Mr. B. is not an understanding, but a nonsensical spirit. An instance of which is this, that it hath no certain rule whereby to measure the love of God. But sometimes it made successes a great argument of God's regard to them; and now it tells us that the crosses are a mark of it, and that the children of God must be persecuted by the world.

Fourthly, the way and spirit of Mr. B. is to trade much, or most, or altogether with fancies and dreams.

N. C. Pray do not say so.

C. You may put it in other words if you please, and say it trades with absolute promises. But that is the same; for they are no better than dreams and fancies.

Fifthly, in the old time, men examined and considered what they believed, and came to faith by rational discourse; but now, in the days of Mr. B., men are taught to believe they know not why, and reason is decried as enmity to the things of God.

Sixthly, in the old times Christians were of a modest and humble spirit; but the way of Mr. B. is to teach them to be high and confident; and to imagine great discoveries and revelations to be made to them. And therefore they wronged Mr. Edwards very much, when they said his Gangræna was full of lies, because he told strange stories of men that pretended to have had revelations and seen visions: for we find Mr. B. is one of them.

Seventhly, in the old time, humility, purity, righteousness, and charity, were held to be things most dear to God; but

now in the way and spirit of Mr. B. we can hear no tidings of them. For he can tell us but of three things that are dear to him; his people, his truth, and his worship. These are his plate, his jewels, his treasure, as I told you the last time out of one of his Ten Sermons. But you must know it is not a new discovery, but an old and darling notion of his, which I find in his sermon before the parliament, Nov. 29, 1643[u]. There he tells us, "Three things God loves more specially; his people, his truth, and his worship." In Dr. Sibbs his time I find there were but two things that God values more than all the world, "the church and the truth;" as he writes in the beginning of his book called Fountain Sealed[x]. And again, in his sermon called Saints' Safety[y], p. 149, "God hath but two things in

[u] [On Zech. i. 18—21, ii. 1; preached before the house of Commons, on their public fast, Nov. 29, 1643. Bridge's Works, vol. iv. p. 320.]

[x] ["A Fountain sealed, or the duty of the sealed to the Spirit, and the worke of the Spirit in sealing; wherein many things are handled about the Holy Spirit, and grieving of it; as also of assurance and sealing, what it is, the priviledges and degrees of it, with the signes to discerne, and meanes to preserve it: being the substance of divers sermons, preached at Grayes Inne, by that reverend divine Richard Sibbs, D. D. and sometimes preacher to that honourable Society." (8vo.) Printed 'at Amstelredam,' in the yeare 1638, with a dedicatory epistle 'to Elizabeth wife to Sir Robert Brooke,' by Tho. Goodwin and Philip Nye.]

[y] ["The Saints Safetie in evill times, delivered at St. Maries in Cambridge, the fifth of November, upon occasion of the Powder Plot, by R. Sibbes, D.D. Master of Katherine-Hall in Cambridge, and preacher at Grayes Inne, London." —8vo, Lond. 1634.

Richard Sibbs was born at Sudbury in Suffolk in 1577, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was soon chosen scholar and subsequently fellow. His first years in the ministry were spent as lecturer at Trinity church in that city. In 1618 he was elected preacher at Gray's Inn, which office he continued to discharge to the period of his death, to the great satisfaction not only of that learned auditory, but also of a large congregation of the nobility and gentry, as well as citizens: notwithstanding a slight impediment which is said to have been perceptible in his speech. About the year 1625 he was elected master of Catharine Hall, which he retained to the end of his days, though in some points a nonconformist. He was however convened before the high commission court, and deprived of his fellowship and lecture. In 1626 he was chosen one of the feoffees for the redemption of impropriations, for which he and his coadjutors in that undertaking were prosecuted at the instigation of Laud in the Star chamber: but the invidious nature of the charge caused it ere long to be relinquished. He died July 5, 1635. Dr. Sibbs' works are chiefly devoted to subjects connected with the practical Christian life, and display an earnest evangelical spirit, with much penetration

the world he much regards, his truth, and his church begotten by his truth." But now they have improved them into three things; and it is become a beloved conceit, I perceive, among Mr. B.'s party: for one of his brethren delivered it to the parliament before him; and told them in a peremptory manner, excluding all other things, "God hath but three things dear to him in the world, the saints, his worship, and his truth[a]." But which of these he loves best he could not tell; "for God therefore ordained saints to be in the world that he might be worshipped; and appointed ordinances of worship as means to build up his saints." Some honest old Christian would have told this great divine, if he had heard him, You trouble yourself, sir, about needless questions: there is something God loves better than all these, viz. holiness, and all moral virtue. For in truth there are no saints or people of God (but only in name) without these. Take away these, and the most orthodox notions that can be in your head will make you no better than a devil. Nor will the exactest worship, according to the purest ordinances, fail to be an abomination to the Lord, if these be absent. But I forget myself. The way and spirit of Mr. B. is not to talk of any thing else but pure worship, pure ordinances, gospel administrations, and such like matters; upon the account of which they esteem themselves more holy, spiritual, and evangelical than other men. And be they never so bad, all's one for that. Mr. B. hath a rule which is very comfortable, "Humble yourselves for sin, though it be never so small; but do not question your condition for any sin, though it be never so great[b]." Perhaps you will say, I do not understand him; and truly that is no such great wonder: for, eighthly, whereas in the old time men wrote and spoke so

into the secret spring and workings of character, and power of applying the great doctrines of revelation to the understanding and wants of men. To his Bruised Reed, a work very popular in its day, Baxter himself attributed in a great measure his own conversion. He is commended by his biographers for his erudition, and his intimacy with many persons of literary eminence, especially the great primate Ussher. —Brook's Puritans, ii. 416.]

[a] Mr. Tho. Goodwin's Ser. of Apr. 27, 1642. p. 31. ["Zerubbabel's Encouragement to finish the Temple, a Sermon preached before the honourable House of Commons, at their late solemn fast, Apr. 27, 1642, by Tho. Goodwin, B.D. published by order from that House," —4to. Lond. 1642.]

[b] Sinfuln. of Sin. p. 34. [Works, vol. v. p. 20.]

that one might understand what they meant, the way and spirit of Mr. B. is quite contrary, which is to speak that which he himself, I believe, doth not understand. Witness several things I could show you in his first of the Ten Sermons, concerning "Love to Christ's personal excellencies, without respect to his benefits."

Besides this, ninthly, in old time they gave good proof for what they said; but the way and spirit of Mr. B. is to put us off with a lousy similitude or two; by which he doth all his feats.

N. C. Why do you speak in this manner?

C. I have good reason for that epithet, but now it is time to make an end. And to say no more but this: in the old time the way was to demonstrate things either from their causes, or from their effects, or from testimony, according as the matter would bear: but now it is much, or mostly, or altogether the way of Mr. B. to make a comparison, and find out some pitiful resemblance, which passes for a good reason of what he says with the men of his way and spirit. Ex. gr. to prove that an unconverted man cannot know how full of sin he is, he will tell you the reason is "because his hoops are on[c]." "As a vessel that is full of liquor, and the liquor issues through the hoops; you see there is liquor in it, but you do not know how full it is till the hoops are knocked off. But then you will say, O how full was this vessel! Ah, now our hoops are on, and it doth not yet appear how full of sin men are; only it comes issuing through the hoops, through their duties; but a day is coming when all our hoops shall be knocked off, and then it will appear how full of sin men are." Thus he argues excellently from the barrel, and at another time you shall find him as good in his reasons taken from another liquor in a brass pan or pot. For to prove that some men's little sufferings may amount to much, whereas other men's great sufferings may amount to little, he can give you no other reason but that God hath a very gracious allowance for his people; a little will content him from them whom he loves. For which he alleges the commendations bestowed on the patience of Job, though he was impatient. "True," saith he[d], "but God did not measure

[c] Sinfuln. of Sin. p. 29. [Works, vol. v. p. 17.]

[d] First and last in suff. work, p. 47. [Seasonable Truths, &c. serm. ii. vol. iii. p. 311.]

Job in his wallops, but when he was cold. As we do not measure milk when it wallops and seeths, but when it is cold——"

N. C. Good sir, have done with this; for it is but the same that you said before in the former particular, when you told me of his similitudes.

C. That is very true. But this is still the way and spirit of Mr. B. to say the same thing over again in a new fashion, and, as the old saying was, to serve up one joint in a dozen or two of dishes. But to give you a full measure, I will put another in the room of that. There was a good Christian spirit in the ancient times; but the way and spirit of Mr. B. is antichristian.

N. C. Fie, for shame. That is the thing he charges on you.

C. I know it very well. But setting aside the papists and a few others, who so guilty of it as himself? For it is antichristian to reproach our church as he doth[e]. It is antichristian to condemn the present worship of God among us, and call it antichristian. To decry an outward glorious worship, as he makes bold to do, is antichristian. It is antichristian to oppose all degrees of men in the church; it being plain that there were apostles, evangelists and prophets ordained by Christ, as there were high priests, priests and Levites ordained by Moses. It is antichristian to call white garments legal and antichristian. In short, a furious, seditious, schismatical spirit, I am sure you will grant, is an antichristian spirit, and such is the spirit of Mr. B., as I will evidently prove.

N. C. Do not undertake an impossible task.

C. There is nothing more easy, as you will soon see, if you look but into his sermon of the Two Witnesses, printed with his name to it. In which you may read the danger we all are in, if his visions and revelations be true. For having told us plainly enough that such as he and their followers are the witnesses who "receive their orders to prophesy from Jesus Christ himself, not from men, from the prelates, from the beast[f];" then he proceeds to let us know what power they have; which, to omit the rest, is twofold and much to be ob-

[e] Compare with his Ten Serm. p. 370. [Works, vol. iii. p. 92.]

[f] Vid. pag. 122. of that book lately printed, 1668. called Seasonable Truths, &c. [Works, vol. iii. p. 358.]

versed. First, "to shut the heavens that they shall not rain," Rev. xi. 6. that is, saith he, "to restrain the highest powers in church and state, from their wonted influence[g]:" which can have none other sense than this; that they shall be so powerful as to bind the hands of their governors, and tie them up from being able to act. And then, secondly, "they shall have power over the waters to turn them into blood," that is, "to turn the still people of a state or nation into war and blood[h]."

N. C. Surely they have no such orders from Jesus Christ; nor will he ever give men such power as this.

C. That is nothing. They may take this power, though he do not give it them: for he tells you, "this may be done, though not legally." For the proof of which, he bids you observe, that though it be said "he will give them power to prophesy;" it is not said "he will give them," but "they shall have power," to shut heaven, and turn the waters into blood: that is, give such orders to themselves, and assume this authority; for he repeats it again, "It may be this may be done, and not legally." What though the laws of God and man command us to obey our magistrates, not to govern them; to live in peace and quiet, and not disturb the public tranquillity; that is a small matter with these men, who fancying they have received a commission to prophecy, may enlarge it a little farther on their own heads, and shut up or imprison the higher powers that they shall not act; and then put the people into a commotion that they may fish in the troubled waters. "And whensoever you see these things come to pass," as he tells you; "when you see the witnesses have power to restrain the highest powers in church and state from their wonted influence; and that they have power to turn the still nations into war, (and so they themselves are slain for the present,) then you may lift up your heads, and comfortably say, Now is our salvation near; for God will bring near his righteousness, and his salvation shall not tarry[i]."

N. C. God forbid I should thus understand his revelations. Truly, it would make me hang down my head, if I thought any such things were now a brewing. I hope for salvation in another way, and had rather it would tarry than be thus accomplished.

[g] [P. 361.] [h] [P. 362.] [i] [Ibid.]

C. Take it as you will, these things are near, if he may be believed, and will not tarry. The influence of the higher powers he imagines, I conceive, are already very much restrained: there wants nothing but the troubling of the quiet and still people, that they may restrain them more powerfully: and that may soon be effected if his doctrine be received.

N. C. He says no such thing.

C. Not in express words, he is wiser than so; but it is the plain sense of his discourse. For he tells you the 1260 years of their prophesying in sackcloth began about the year 400, and therefore "surely the end of the time we must needs be about[k];" as his words are, p. 114. Now if you mark what they are to do toward the end of the time, you will see it as plain as the nose on my face, that he thinks we must needs be about the time of shutting the heavens, and turning the waters into blood.

N. C. We are past the time, my good friend, for if we add 1260 to 400, the year when they ended their prophecy was 1660. O how glad I am that he was mistaken. I hope we shall have no wars nor tumults; and that God will open these men's eyes to see their errors; since no powers were then restrained but those that would have kept the king from his throne, to which he was restored in that happy year.

C. You are an honest hearted man, I see, which makes you less suspect the craft of others. There is one word in his discourse which you do not observe, viz. "thereabout;" that salves the business, and serves him for a little while. For he tells you the 1260 years might begin in 406 or 410 after our Saviour's birth. If you take the former number, then the prophesying in sackcloth ended in 1666, the year when they expected such great matters, that some confidently cried to the people out the pulpits, before they left them, "Be patient, for 1666 will make amends for all." But it failing their expectation, and producing nothing according to their mind; that is the reason, I conceive, why he hath since that put in the year 410 for the beginning of the years 1260, and so adjourns us for their ending to 1670, which is now approaching. Then no doubt he fancies the witnesses must be slain, (when they have first troubled us) and after three years and a half rise again. For

[k] [P. 356.]

he asks his people, p. 115, "If Christ's witnesses shall lie in sackcloth 1260 years, will not you be contented to be in sackcloth three or four years? Christians, will you not be contented to be in sackcloth three or four years[l]?" And in the next page after tells them, "Why now, according to the calculation, there is not much time to come. There is but a little time of sackcloth to come. Shall we not watch with him one hour, and wear sackcloth with him one hour? Wait awhile, and *he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*" And then he tells them they shall wear white robes, and come out with palms in their hands; that is, the kingdom shall become theirs, and they shall reign and triumph over us.

N. C. He doth not apply these things to us in this nation, as you seem to understand him.

C. He tells us indeed, p. 124, that he will not apply them to times and places[m]. But those words are only a gross equivocation, (which he must be very thick-sculled who doth not discern,) for he had done it already: having told his hearers that they were Christ's witnesses, and that now they were in a "sackcloth condition[n]," (as his phrase is,) but that it would not last long, and that before it was ended they should have power to restrain the higher powers, and trouble the people. What need he tell them more? It is enough, I make no question, to make them lift up their heads (as he oft exhorts them) and bear them very high; as being likely in short time to have dominion over us. And I cannot for my life but look upon them as satiating their fancies with the imagination of this day of vengeance. Methinks I see them (to use the words of a famous writer against our church and state in another case[o]) like a man "who in the drought observes the sky, sitting and watching when any thing may drop that may solace them with the likeness of a punishment from heaven upon us; which they straight explain as they please." No evil can befall us, "but presently they positively interpret it a judgment upon us for their sakes: and as if the very manuscript of God's judgments had been delivered to their custody and exposition," they make the people believe that "the witnesses are smiting the

[l] [P. 356.] [m] [P. 362.] 26. Prose works by J. A. St. John, vol. i. p. 468.]
[n] [P. 356.]
[o] [Milton's *Εἰκονοκλάστης*, chap.

earth with plagues, and finishing their testimony against us." But thanks be to God, their reading declares it abundantly to be a false copy which they use. "For (to speak in his words again) they often dispense to their own bad deeds and successes the testimony of divine favour; and to the good deeds and successes of other men, divine wrath and vengeance." And besides, they have abused the people so oft with their false predictions from these and other prophecies, that I hope the world will see "these are false witnesses, (if I may use the words of David to a different sense) that are risen up against us, breathing forth cruelty:" who beheld lying visions, and prophesy out of their own hearts: whose thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, as the prophet Isaiah speaks, wasting and destruction are in their paths. And I would to God that you for your part would seriously consider (to use his words once more) "that to counterfeit the hand of God, is the boldest of all forgeries; and that he who without any warrant but his own surmise takes upon him perpetually to unfold the secrets and unsearchable mysteries of high Providence, is likely for the most part to mistake and slander them; and approaches to the madness of those reprobate thoughts that would wrest the sword of justice out of God's hand, and employ it more justly in their own conceit. It is but a small thing for such men as these to grasp at all power here on earth; when we see them doing little less than laying hands on the weapons of God himself, which are his judgments; to wield and manage them by the sway and bent of their own frail cogitations." It is true indeed, in this manner to sit spelling and observing divine justice upon every accident and slight disturbance that may happen humanly to the affairs of men, is but a fragment of your broken revenge: yet it is "the shrewdest and cunningest obloquy (as he well observes) that can be thrown upon our actions." For if they can persuade the people that we are pursued with the divine vengeance, they have obtained their end to make all men forsake us, and think the worst that can be thought of us. If they can make them believe that they are the witnesses of Christ, and we the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit; that we are going to slay them, and that three or four years hence they shall rise again, and all become theirs; they have promoted their design in the craftiest manner that can be

devised. The still people will be put into seditious commotions notwithstanding all the laws; they that are now quiet will be stirred as with a mighty wind, and conceit (poor souls) that they are moved by the Spirit of the Lord, and are doing the work of God, fulfilling prophecies, and making the clearest comment on the Revelations.

But if there be not a fatal blindness on them, I shall plainly show you, that this is so gross a cheat that no observing person can be deluded by it. Mr. Bridge, you must know, is not the first that hath suborned the Revelation to speak on his side, and witness to his cause. There have been many before him who have assumed the persons of prophets: and prognosticated their own wishes would come to pass. But the event hath so evidently detected the fraud, and made the forgery appear, that he is very impudent who goes about to serve himself of this old trick, and they prodigiously silly who will still be deluded by it; and feed on the weak conjectures of those who have nothing else to support their sinking spirits, but that which hath made so many ashamed who relied on it.

For Mr. Archer[o], you must know, in the year 1642, from this very prophecy of the two witnesses, filled the people's heads with this conceit, that "the end of the papacy would be in the

[o] In his book of the personal reign of Christ. ["The personall reigne of Christ upon earth, &c. by John Archer, sometimes preacher of All-Hallows, Lombard Street,"—4to, Lond. 1643.

Archer was minister of the parish of All-Hallows, Lombard Street, in the city of London, suspended for non-conformity by archbishop Laud and compelled to fly the kingdom. He became pastor of an independent congregation at Arnheim in Holland, having Thomas Goodwin for his colleague. Little is recorded of his history, but his death is said to have taken place about the year 1640. He was an independent in his views of church-government and discipline, and an advocate of ultra-millenary or fifth monarchy sentiments, expecting a personal appearance of Christ on earth in those days, which forms the subject of the present work. He is charged with holding wild antinomian sentiments, to the extent of saying that God is the author of sin, even of the pravity and sinfulness of it, for which blasphemy a treatise of his, "Of the Comfort of Believers against their sins and sorrows," was censured by the assembly of divines, and ordered by the house of Lords to be burnt by the common hangman. An independent minister at Halstead in Essex, of the same name, is mentioned by Edwards as preaching much against the presbyterians, and the payment of tithes, but his identity seems open to doubt.—Gangræna, part 2. p. 18. Baillie's Dissuasive, p. 79. Brook's Puritans, ii. 455, who has erroneously described him by the name of Henry Archer.]

year 1666." They are his express words, p. 44; and he repeats the same again, p. 46, where he tells us, that "the witnesses shall recover again in 1666, and draw off one kingdom in Europe from the papacy, and ruin Rome; and this was that woe which ends the sixth trumpet." Upon which account he adds[p], that "the seventh trumpet may begin presently after the ruin of Rome," and so the thousand years commence *an.* 1670[q]. This no doubt was of singular use in those days to inspire your people with lofty hopes, and bear up their hearts in the good old cause against all discouragements; and therefore Mr. Bridge flies to this sanctuary now, and expects the same success again on the spirits of his ignorant proselytes, who have forgot the vanity of such prophets, or never reflect on the uncertainty of their guesses.

N. C. Do not trouble me, I entreat you, with such relations.

C. It need be no trouble to you, because you may reap a singular profit by hearing how such as he have deluded your expectations. For there was another man a little after Mr. Archer[r], who in his lectures at St. Lawrence Jewry about the

[p] [P. 50.]

[q] [This is not quite exact. He says, "Therefore I thinke, that the seventh trumpet may begin presently after the ruine of Rome, *anno Domini* 1666, and bring in a pure state of churches, and yet Christ not to come and begin the thousand yeares, till *anno Dom.* 1700; for surely in the thousand yeares there shall be no temple, as was showed before."—p. 50.]

[r] Mr. Fr. Woodcock. ["The Two Witnesses; discovered in severall sermons upon the eleventh chapter of the Revelation, wherein, after the prophisie opened, the great question of these times, viz. whether the two witnesses are slain, yea, or no, is modestly discussed; preached at Lawrence-Jewry in London, by F. W. lecturer of the said place."—4to, Lond. 1643. p. 82, sqq.

"Francis Woodcock, son of Robert Woodcock, was born in the city of Chester in the year 1613, applied his mind to academical studies in Brasen. coll., in Easter term 1629, aged 15 years, took a degree in arts, holy orders from a bishop, and then left the house, and had a cure of souls bestowed on him. But being always puritanically affected, he sided with the presbyterians upon a defection of a predominant party in the long parliament, an. 1640, became a lecturer of S. Lawrence church in the Jewry in London, one of the assembly of divines, and at length by ordinance of parliament, dated 10 Jul. 1646, was made parson of S. Olaves in Southwark, having for some time before exercised his function in that place." He took the Covenant with the rest of his brethren. From Brook's statement that he was chosen proctor to the university of Cambridge it would appear that he had at some time been incorporated into that university. He died in the year 1649, and was buried in St. Olave's church.—Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 302. Neal, iv. 54. Brook, iii. 109.]

two witnesses (printed by an order of a committe of the House of Commons, 27th April, 1643,) tells us quite another story, and will have the rising of the witnesses to begin more early. For his opinion is, that the 1260 years begin between the first invasion of the empire, *an.* 365, and the sacking of Rome, *an.* 410; and the year he pitches on is 380, or two or three years before; and then the end of them (excluding the three years and a half in which the witnesses lie dead,) fell out about 1637 or 1638. Then, he saith, the antichristian powers, i. e. the bishops, slew the witnesses, by silencing, suspending, and throwing them out of their places. And then there was great rejoicing and making merry (according to Rev. xi. 10.) by the popish prelatical faction, as he is pleased to call them. But after three years and a half, i. e. at the beginning of the long parliament, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and made them stand upon their feet, and restored them to their liberty, to the great astonishment of the antichristian faction. Nay, they ascended up to heaven, (ver. 12,) i. e. were called by the parliament to a more ample condition; and they went up in a cloud, i. e. abundance of people congratulated their freedom. Which was then done most remarkably, when three of these witnesses (Mr. Prynne, Mr. Bastwick, and Mr. Burton) were brought in triumph from the uttermost parts of the kingdom. Then was the earthquake, (spoken of Rev. xi. 13,) i. e. great commotions which began with the parliament: and a tenth part of the city fell, i. e. if you will believe him, prelacy and ceremonies: and seven thousand men were slain, i. e. prelates, deans, and chapters with their appurtenances, had their honour, places, maintenance taken from them. In short, he confidently affirms the scene wherein these great things must be acted is one kingdom only; and that it is no other but the "island of Great Britain; and the time of doing them, some years before and since the calling of the long parliament," p. 83. And so he concludes very triumphantly, p. 90, "Since the witnesses are slain and risen again, cheer up then; strengthen these weak hands. Verily the bitterness of death is already over; and from henceforth expect better days than either our eyes or the eyes of our forefathers ever saw." Which is a clear demonstration that these men think themselves concerned in all the good things, and us in all the evil, contained in that book; and

that every little change in our affairs makes them imagine they see themselves about to be raised, and us to fall under their feet: but yet that their high confidences hitherto have been ungrounded, and were the birth of their proud fancies, not the fruit of their sound understanding of the revelations of God. And such Mr. B.'s prophecies I hope will prove, who, notwithstanding all those glorious days which his fellows promised, is still whining and complaining of their sackcloth condition, and waits for another parliament to make them ascend up to heaven in a cloud, and slay seven thousand men once more, i. e. according to the former exposition, the bishops, deans, and chapters, with all the maintenance that belongs to them. Yet this I will say for him, that he is a little more merciful than Mr. Woodcock was. For he only threatens destruction to us in this world; but the other saith, the power of the witnesses to shut heaven that it rain not, is the power to hold all tidings of forgiveness, mercy, and peace, from the antichristian Gentiles, (i. e. such as we,) while they continue such: and declaring them a people to whom no heaven, no forgiveness belongs while in that condition, i. e. while we oppose your desires. You may read this, p. 73.

N. C. Enough of this. I see their vanity plainly.

C. Nay, let me tell you a little more, for fear you should forget all this, and shut your eyes again. About two years after this prophet, another, who will not name himself, arose, and dedicated a book to the parliament with this title, "The great mystery of God, or The vision of the evening and the morning opened[s]." In which he tells us the two houses of the Lords and Commons are the two witnesses which the Spirit of Christ foretold should be raised up to heaven, the high place

[s] Printed 1645. ["The Great Mysterie of God: or the Vision of the evening and the morning opened, whereby comparing Scripture with acts of Divine providence, will plainly appeare that the ruine of mysticall Babylon, and the erecting of spirituall Jerusalem are the ground of these present commotions; which are not to cease till by meanes of this present parliament, the worke being so compleated, that Christ shall in and by his saints in tranquillity reigne on earth one thousand yeeres. London, printed for John Wright in the old Bayley, 1645." It is dedicated by the anonymous author to the two houses of parliament: whom he looks upon "as those two great witnesses which the Spirit of Christ foretold long since should be raised up to heaven, the high place of justice and judgment."]

of justice and judicature. For though all the people of God were witnesses for 1260 years, yet they in a more especial manner, because they were not only to protest against antichrist, but were "that judgment which should sit and take his kingdom and dominion from him," raised to heaven by the power of Christ for that end, Dan. vii 26[t]. And therefore he is very confident that our Lord reckoned the 1260 years from the year 375. So that the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth ended 1635[u]. Then they were slain, i. e. deprived of their civil power, if they spoke any thing against the pope and prelates; and those three gentlemen mentioned before, he tells us, were a lively emblem of the rest. But then between 1638 and 1639, the Spirit of God entered into the hearts and spirits of the godly party, both in England and Scotland, as he did into Cyrus; and they took all the power and strength they had to free themselves from that dead and slavish condition whereinto antichrist had brought them. And a great fear fell upon all the antichristian party both in England and Scotland, yea (such, if you will believe him, was the terror of their appearance) at Rome itself. And then presently they heard a voice from heaven, (i. e. the place of judicature,) saying, *Come up hither*, i. e. that wise and godly men would ascend now to those places to do justice upon antichrist. "This voice was heard first from the whole commons in Scotland, in whom (mind it well, for it is rare doctrine) all the power that is in heaven did originally reside: and afterwards in England, both from the whole commonwealth, and likewise from the king himself who sat in heaven." And "they ascended to heaven" (i. e. to the high places of judicature) the same time, 1639, in Scotland, and afterward here in this kingdom[x]." For the rest of the godly "were with child with this great truth, that the Lord Jesus in and by his saints was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; which is spoken of (he saith) Rev. xii. 5, &c."

"And they cried and travailed in pain to God by humble

[t] [Chap. 7. p. 37.] For the ruin of mystical Babylon (he tells you in his title-page) and erecting the spiritual Jerusalem were the ground of our commotions, which were not to cease till by that parliament the work was so completed, that Christ in and by his saints should reign on earth a thousand years.

[u] [Chap. 8. p. 47.]

[x] [Chap. 5. p. 20.]

and fervent prayers, and to his witnesses which sat in heaven by humble petitions, from the year of Christ 1639 to 1641; that the Lord Christ, that man-child, might in and by his saints rule the nation with a rod of iron. Whereupon the great red dragon, i. e. "the popish lords and prelates," bestirred themselves to devour this man-child as soon as it was born; but the people of God bestirred themselves both to God by prayer, and to the godly party in parliament, that these popish lords and prelates might be cast out. And these petitions and prayers were heard of Christ and his witnesses, Rev. xii. 5[y]. And so the church did not only "bring forth the man-child of government," (mark that, for it tells you some presbyterians taught that all power was originally in the people,) but it was likewise "received up to God and his throne into the high place of judicature." But "the dragon with his tail drew a third part of parliament to fall off at the same time," and likewise a war was raised "between the dragon and his angels, (i. e. the king and his followers,) and the Lord Jesus and his witnesses sitting in parliament[z]." In short, he tells you that what was done here should be done in all other kingdoms in the year 1655, when "Christ and his witnesses should take the power of all the ten kingdoms which antichrist had in their hands, and should reign[a]:" yet so that there should be some little relics of antichrist in the hearts of men till the year 1700. Then the new Jerusalem, he assures you, shall be built, and the Lamb be married to his church, and antichrist cast not only out of the world, but out of the hearts of men[b].

These are some of the goodly dreams or visions (call them which you please) of your divines heretofore. And no doubt they were then as much believed as Mr. B.'s predictions are now. Who, if he live to see himself deceived, will be able, it is like, to invent some new beginning for the 1260 years, and you will still be so foolish as to give him credit, unless these things convince you of the madness of the prophet. But if he be at a loss, and think such a blind creature as I can give him notice of any thing he sees not already, I may help him at a dead lift, and direct him to a book where he shall find relief. All my fear is, that he will give me little thanks for my pains, because

[y] [Chap. 8. pp. 46, 7.] [z] [Chap. 9. p. 48.] [a] [Chap. 10. p. 63.] [b] [P. 64.]

it will make his heart sick to hear his hope is like to be so long deferred. For after these writers I have mentioned, Mr. Tho. Parker of New England printed a book about these things, in which he lays down "two ways of accommodating the years[c]." If they begin when there were but "dark and weak beginnings of the signs mentioned," that was he thinks in the year 340, and so the 1260 years end with 1649. "Then the Turks will cease to be loosed, and the next year after they may begin to fall together with the pope, if this way of accommodation hold." If it do not, then we must stay a great while: for the more evident, open, and perfect state of the things foregoing was not till the year 600, and so no shutting of the heavens, no turning the water into blood, at least no putting off their sackcloth, which Mr. B. now expects, till the year 1859.

N. C. Stop, sir, I beseech you once more. For I think you have told me too much of this stuff.

C. The last man speaks modestly, and therefore it was not amiss to hear him. As for the rest, I should not have troubled you with their conjectures, had it not been to let you see, first, what they think of us; whom they call the antichristian, the popish party, the Gentiles and nations, the followers of the dragon, and such like names. Secondly, what they think themselves; who are, in their own esteem, the witnesses of Christ Jesus, the godly party, the saints that are to rule the nations with a rod of iron; the followers of the Lamb, who are to ascend to heaven, the seat of justice, and do execution upon us. Lastly, what a sandy foundation their hopes are built upon; and how confident they are, and well persuaded of themselves without any cause at all. And that indeed is the chiefest thing I aimed at; to make you sensible, they have no ground for that high opinion they have conceived of their own wisdom and insight into the things of God: they being blindly led by their own imaginations and passionate desires, while they think they understand and see more than all the wise men in the world. So the last man but one that I named bragged and vapoured; glorying that he "had found out that truth which none of the wicked should understand; neither priest nor prophet, rulers nor seers." All is hid and covered

[c] The Visions and Proph. of Dan. opened, [§ 19. pp. 134, 9. 4to, Lond. 1646.]

from them, and the reason is, because they drank of the cup of the whore, of which if a man take but one sip, he is utterly incapable to have the visions or mysteries made known to him. And therefore he triumphs in this manner over all our nobles and clergy: "Who will believe, of all our great men and learned prelates, that Jesus Christ is come in the clouds of heaven, and is set down upon the throne of judicature in his saints and witnesses, to judge that man of sin?" No indeed; they had more wit. And yet this the man thought, in his self-conceited wisdom, to be as clear as the sun.

N. C. I am fully satisfied that they were much out of the way; and therefore more words are needless.

C. That the way (you might have said) and spirit of Mr. Bridge is mostly and chiefly to be out of the way.

N. C. I leave those conceits to you.

C. And you will leave it to me also, for you take no notice of it, to tell you the cause of all this.

N. C. Because I do not know it.

C. It is easy to see that is nothing else but their pride and vain conceit of themselves; as if God would reveal all his secrets to them, and hide them from others. For they are the watchmen upon the tower, the ambassadors of Christ, the angels of the churches, the Lord's worthies: and they that follow them are the holy ones, the dear people of God, the little flock, the lambs of Christ, the meek of the earth, the redeemed ones, and the remnant of Jacob. Nay, as soon as ever any persons come to hear them preach, they hope there is a work of grace in their hearts, and that they begin to savour the things of God, and to desire the sincere milk of the word. As for our ministers, alas poor creatures! they are the false prophets, blind guides, idol shepherds, that have eyes indeed but cannot see at all. And our people are the world, the wicked, the children of the evil one, enemies of God, and such as remain still in Egypt. At least, the veil is before our eyes; or we have taken a sip of the cup of the whore, and that sends up such fumes into our heads, that we cannot possibly discern the mysteries of God. Hence it is that the meanest of you takes himself to be wiser than the best of us; than any of our bishops and priests, nay, the whole clergy put together. And if we will not have such a man in the same esteem that he

hath himself; presently we are looked upon as enemies of the power of godliness, formal fellows, or mere moralists, that hate the true seed.

N. C. Doth not David tell us, that God made him wiser than any of his teachers?

C. See how you still equal yourselves with men inspired. From which vain conceit and arrogant opinion, I make no doubt it is that you take every sudden fancy and strong imagination that comes into your head, to be an inspiration of God; and that you are so adventurous and bold in expounding the Holy Scriptures, as if it were given you in that moment, as it was the apostles, what you should think and what you should speak. Nay, so deep have you drunk of this witches' cup, and are so intoxicated with self-conceit and self-love, that you imagine all your devices and forms of religion and government must be received by all the world. For your mind is the mind of God, and your words the oracles of God.

So even Mr. Edwards[d] himself seems to fancy, when he exhorts all people that were waving and hung doubtful between presbytery and independency, to wait upon God in that way of his, an assembly of so many learned and godly men, to see what he will be pleased to speak by them.

N. C. What is this to all the world? were they bound also to listen to what this oracle would utter?

C. You are too quick. I was going to add, that as they think themselves the best people here, so the best in the world; and look upon the reformation itself as needing a reformation. And therefore hoped that if they settled religion among us according to their mind, there would be a pattern from the word set up in this island, for an example to all other kirks abroad. Thus the commissioners of the General Assembly of the kirk of Scotland tell us: and therefore call upon the ministers to "stir up themselves and the people in truth and unity[e];" because, say they, "it will be a powerful means to preserve our religion, and to propagate the same to other churches, groaning under their several burdens, and panting for such a reformation as the Lord in mercy hath granted us."

[d] Epistle before his Antapolog. [See p. 503, above]

[e] Directions to Ministers anent Malignants, p. 12. [Quoted above, p. 490.]

And accordingly they indicted the fast I told you of, on the Lord's day, for the promoting unity in religion, and uniformity in government, and the advancing the kingdom of Christ (i. e. their discipline) every where."

N. C. None excepted?

C. No. For Mr. Case[f] tells the commissioners of the general assembly, that "God had honoured their nation in making them the first fruits and pattern of thorough and covenant reformation to us, and all the rest of the Christian world." And withal says, "I am humbly confident that the same shore shall not bound this covenant, which bounds the now two covenanting nations. But, as it is said of the gospel, so it will be verified of this gospel covenant; the sound thereof shall go into all the earth, and the words of it to the end of the world[g]."

N. C. Strange presumption!

C. I suppose he would have found a text for it in the Revelation, if you had presumed then to question his humble confidence. For I observe the General Assembly tell his majesty, that if they may but have that unity in religion and uniformity of church-government in the two kingdoms which they petition him for, it will appear then that "the unhappy commotions and divisions among us were but the noise of many waters, and the voice of a great thunder before the voice of harpers, harping with their harps; which shall fill the whole land with melody and mirth; and the name of it shall be The Lord is there[h]." The place to which they refer, you know, is Rev. xiv. 2. Now immediately after this joy and melody there

[f] Epistle before his book called the Quarrel of the Covenant, dedicated to them. ["The Quarrell of the Covenant, with the Pacification of the quarrell, delivered in three sermons on Levit. xxvi, 25, and Jer. l. 5, by Thomas Case, preacher of the Word in Milk Street, London; and one of the Assembly of Divines,"—4to. Lond. 1644.]

[g] P. 62. of that book.

[h] Letter to his Majesty, July 27, 1642. [This letter forms the fourth in order of a series of fifteen miscellaneous papers, entitled, "A view of the present condition of the three kingdomes of England, Scotland, and Ireland, &c., printed for John Bellamy and Ralph Smith,"—Lond. 4to. 1642. It is headed, "To the king's most excellent Majesty, the hearty thanksgiving and humble petition of the Generall Assembly met at St. Andrewes, the 27 July, 1642;" and to it is appended the note, "This petition was presented by the Lord Maitland, August 11, 1642." —P. 6.]

follows, as you may see, ver. 6, an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. That is, as Mr. Case perhaps might have expounded it, this gospel covenant St. John saw, upon the wing, about to fly to the end of the world.

N. C. No man could be so absurd.

C. What greater absurdity is there in this than in the application which the general assembly make of the foregoing words to the same purpose?

N. C. I approve of neither.

C. But then possibly they might have persuaded you it was a good exposition; when Mr. Case made you believe the covenant was an ordinance of God, an holy ordinance[i], a pure and heavenly ordinance; yea, one of the most special and solemn, being a joining ordinance which strikes the main stroke between God and us; the marriage knot, whereby God and a people are made one; a piece of divine worship, and, as far as I can discern, a more holy or higher ordinance, in his esteem, than the sacrament of Christ's body and blood.

N. C. For shame, do not abuse men.

C. I am far from it, as you may see if you will but consult his answer to this objection, which some made against it. It is needless, say they, to take the covenant; or rather "a profanation of so holy an ordinance; since we have done it over and over again in our former protestations and covenants." To which he replies; "You receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper once a month, and that is but a seal of the covenant. Consider it, and be convinced[k]."

N. C. I am convinced of this, that you do not belie him.

C. Very well. And therefore he exhorts the ministers to endeavour to "sanctify the people for so holy a service[l]," as the taking of it; and tells the people that they must get their hearts into an "holy ordinance frame." Just as if they were going to a new Mount Sinai, to be entered into a new religion; and separated from the nations to be a peculiar people zealous of the covenant. And indeed he all along makes it of the same nature with that covenant, which the children of Israel

[i] V. p. 8. and other places of the forecited book. [Pp. 12, 20, &c.]

[k] [Pp. 39, 40.]

[l] [Serm. ii. p. 67.]

made or renewed with God: and so confidently applies all the places of Scripture which speak of that to his holy service, that one cannot tell by any thing he says, but this was the covenant which the holy books speak of. Nay, some of them when the covenant came into England looked upon it as the ark of God's presence, as Mr. Feak tells us [m], upon the account of which they should certainly prosper. And Mr. Case, I remember, tells us, this was the sin of England in former times, that our fathers knew not this service: it was hid from them; they regarded it not: and those times of ignorance God winked at, or God lightly regarded them.

N. C. Sure he did not imagine all our pious ancestors to be heathens.

C. You shall judge by and by what thoughts these men have of us all, when I have told you that in the strength of these high towering thoughts and lofty imaginations they taught the people to go to battle against their sovereign, and to fancy the Lord marched before them. They were confident they should prevail, because they were the Jacobs and we but Esaus, and "the elder must serve the younger:" nay, we the seed of the serpent, and they the seed of the woman, and so they must "wound our head," i. e. give us an "incurable mortal blow." Thus they were taught by Mr. H. Wilkinson [n], in an epistle

[m] Beam of Light. [p. 13. marg.]

[n] [Henry Wilkinson, whom Anthony à Wood designates Long Harry, to distinguish him from another divine of the same name, whom he terms Dean Harry, was born at Waddesdon, Bucks, in the year 1609, became a commoner of Magd. Hall, Oxon, in 1622, was admitted B. D. in 1638, and gained celebrity as a preacher in and about that university. For a sermon preached at St. Mary's church, Sept. 6, 1640, on Rev. iii. 16, inveighing against ceremonies, and in favour of the Scottish discipline, he was punished by suspension from all clerical functions, till such time as he should retract. Appeal however being made to parliament, at the latter end of November following, the sentence was pronounced void, and his sermon ordered to be printed by authority of the house of Commons. Wilkinson upon this settled in London, became minister of St. Faith's in the crypt of St. Paul's, one of the Assembly of Divines, and in 1645 rector of St. Dunstan's Fleet St. He was employed at Oxford in 1646 as one of the six parliamentary visitors for enforcing the presbyterian model throughout the university, for which service he was rewarded with a senior fellowship at Magd. Coll. (which he vacated on his marriage with Lady Carr), a canonry of Ch. Ch., the degree of D. D., and the Margaret professorship of divinity. On the restoration he was ejected, and formed a congregation at Clapham, where

before a sermon of his[n]; in which he tells the parliament again, that they have to do with a "brood of serpents," p. 13; at the best, that we are but a piece of "Papal Christendom," as his phrase is, p. 8. Nay, when the pride and passion boils up to its height, then they look upon us and the rest of the world but as infidels and pagans. What other construction can you make of the letter of the Scots in Ireland to the general Assembly[o]? in which they desire them to send over some min-

he died early in June 1675. His remains were interred with great pomp at St. Dunstan's church. His works consist chiefly of sermons before parliament and in the Morning Exercise, and are described by Wood as "full of dire and confusion, especially while the rebellion lasted." —Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 1038. Calamy, Account of Silenced Ministers, 61.]

[n] Preached before the parliament 25 Oct. 1643. ["Babylon's Ruine, Jerusalem's rising: set forth in a sermon preached before the honourable house of Commons on the 25th Octob. being the day appointed for the monthly fast, solemnly to be observed; by Henry Wilkinson, B. D. late divinity reader in Magdalen Hall, Oxford. Published by order of that house,"—4to, Lond. 1644.]

[o] Convened at St. Andrews in July, 1642. [This document, and the answer to it next referred to, are to be met with in a folio volume entitled, "The principall Acts of foure Generall Assemblies of the kirk of Scotland: holden at Edinburgh 1639, at Aberdeene 1640, at S. Andrews and Edinburgh 1641, at S. Andrews 1642. Edinburgh, printed by Evan Tyler, printer to the king's most excellent majestie, anno 1642."—p. 54.

"Sess. xiii. 6 Aug. 1642. A petition from some distressed professors in Ireland, to the reverend and right honourable the moderator and remanent members of the generall Assembly of Scotland, conveened at S. Andrews, July 1642: the humble petition of the most part of the Scottish nation in the north of Ireland, in their own names, and in the name of the rest of the protestants there." The petitioners conclude their request for "ministers for the house of our God," by urging, "But if herein our hopes shall faile us, we shall not know whether to wish that we had died with our brethren by the enemies hand; for we shall be as if it were said to us *Go and serve other gods:* yet looking for another kind of answer at your hands, for in this you are to us as an angel of God, we have sent these bearers, Mr. John Gordoun, and M. Hugh Campbell, our brethren, who may more particularly informe you of our case, and desire that at their returne, they may refresh the bowels of

your most instant and
earnest suppliants."

The same two papers form also the fourteenth and fifteenth of a series of instruments published by authority of parliament, in a quarto volume, in 1642, with the title of "A Declaration of the Lords and Commons assembled in parliament, sent to the General Assembly of the church of Scotland, with their answer thereunto," &c. The petition is signed by "The Lord Vicount of Mountgomery of Aires, Sir Iohn Clotworthy knight Collonell, and divers others underscribing, and most part of the Scottish nation in

isters to them, "God having now opened a fair door to the gospel" by the banishment of the prelates and their followers. Nay, they call to them, as if they made an address to so many apostles, and the protestants in Ireland were but so many heathens, "Pity poor Macedonians, crying to you, that you would come and help us, &c. Send able men to help to lay the foundation of God's house according to the pattern." And agreeable to this petition they returned an answer in the apostolical language[p], telling them, though they are "loath to stretch themselves beyond their own measure, yet they dare not be wanting to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom." And so they send them some men "to plant and to water according to the directions of Jesus Christ, and the doctrine and discipline of that kirk:" wishing that they who are sent may "come with the full blessing of the gospel of peace;" and that they will "with all cheerfulness embrace and make use of the message of salvation," p. 14. Who would not think, that reads this, if he were a stranger to our country, that some few Christians in that island had sent for some apostolical men or evangelists to plant the gospel among a pagan people? and that the prelates and ministers under their obedience had been but so many heathen priests that nursed up the nation in barbarous ignorance? Such is the goodly conceit they have of themselves, and their horrible contempt and scorn of all others. From whence it is that they call us *the nations*, asking their people when they do any thing that we do, Why do you imitate the customs of the nations? And there used, I remember, to be no phrase more common than this, when a man removed his dwelling to a place where one of your ministers was, that He went to live under the gospel. And when they inquired of the welfare of their friends, the current phrase was, How do the Christians of such a town? According to the import of which language Mr. Bridge takes the boldness to call us Gentiles in the ears of the house of Commons[q], telling them that the "horns (the king's party) may push and scatter for a time," but "the carpenters (viz. the parliament) shall fray them away, and cast out these Gentiles."

the North, to the Generall Assembly conveened at Saint Andrewes, July 1642."]

[p] August 6 of the same year. [ibid.]

[q] Fast sermon, Nov. 29, 1643. [On Zech. i. 18–21; ii. 1. Bridge's Works, vol. iv. p. 319.]

And another bold writer[r] tells them that the army had "often put the armies of the aliens to flight," and therefore must be considered. Nay, he is so profane as to say, "Take heed of resisting the Holy Ghost, for that mighty works have been done by these men you cannot deny," p. 12. Miracles it seems were revived again to convince us, who were either poor legalists, or heathen idolaters. Yea, God did "by a continued series of miracles and wonders" (if you will believe the rump of the parliament[s]) "exalt his name in the eyes of this and neighbour nations by their means." But alas! we were the most reprobate and hard-hearted of all other aliens, that could not be converted: "uncircumcised Philistines," in Mr. Case's language; nay, Amalekites, with whom the Lord would have war for ever.

N. C. Now you grossly abuse them.

C. Read the preface to Mr. W. Bridges's sermon[t], and judge whether I be guilty of that fault or no.

N. C. What doth he say?

C. He tells you that the business of Christ's kingdom is looked upon by the squint-eyed multitude under an "Hexapla of considerations."

N. C. What's an Hexapla?

C. Nay, you must not trouble yourself about his phrase, for he tells you in the conclusion of that preface, "It is such as I can speak; and I desire to be thankful it is no worse, considering my deserts."

N. C. Well then, let's hear it, as bad as it is.

[r] Paræneticke to the Parliament and Assembly for Liberty, 1644. ["A Paræneticke or humble addresse to the parliament and assembly for (not loose but) Christian libertie, second impression, printed and allowed according to order."—anon. 4to, Lond. 1644.]

[s] Declaration of 27 Sept. 1649. ["A Declaration of the parliament of England, in vindication of their proceedings, and discovering the dangerous practices of several interests, against the present government and peace of the commonwealth, together with the resolutions of the parliamentthereupon; ordered to be printed, die Jovis, 27 September, 1649."—p. 5. Reprinted in Parl. Hist. iii. 1319.]

[t] Preached before the house of Commons, Feb. 22, 1642. ["Joab's Counsel, and king David's seasonable hearing of it," a sermon (on 2 Sam. xix. 5–8.) 'by W. Bridges, preacher at St. Dunstan's in the East,' is with more probability to be attributed to Walter Bridges, than William Bridge. It has not been included in the recent edition of the Works of the latter divine. (See the Preface, vol. i. p. ix. and compare p. 474 of the present work.) It has been reprinted in the Somers Tracts, vol. iv. p. 58, &c.]

C. After he hath done with the theological, the historical, and the legal, he comes to the fourth consideration, which is critical. And what's that, think you?

N. C. You would not let me ask questions, and therefore I will make no answer to yours.

C. You would never guess if you did, nor can the most critical of you all tell why he gave it that name; for it is only this, "My money shall never help to kill men." To which he answers, "Well, if you hinder the killing, quelling of those who would both kill and quell us, ours, our religion, kingdom, you become friends of God's enemies and ours; and resolve to make peace with them, with whom God hath resolved to have war, Exod. xvii. ult." What think you now, did not this man look upon us as Amalekites? and wish the servants of the living God, to whom he addresses his Hexapla of considerations, would have war with us eternally? Do you not see what is like to become of us, if men of this spirit have power again proportionable to their will? Must not our names be blotted out? And must not he be accursed that *doth the work of the Lord negligently?*

N. C. I pray no more questions.

C. And then all your victories will be called once more, 'the return of prayers,' which you take to be as powerful as the lifting up of Moses's hands. And all the miseries which befall us, 'the day of the Lord's vengeance for the blood of his faithful servants.' For I must tell you, another effect of your pride is——

N. C. Do not put me among that number.

C. Their pride then is to think every favour that is done them to be their due, and so they are bound to thank nobody for it. God, they fancy, makes the wicked serve them, and causes them to do that for their sake which they had no intention to do. And, on the contrary, if any justice be done upon any of themselves, presently it is voted persecution, cruelty, enmity to the people of God, and hatred of his truth and ways. But let them exercise never so great oppression, tyranny, and cruelty upon their neighbours; it shall be cried up as zeal for God and his cause, love to justice and pure religion; at least excused, as a fulfilling the decrees of the Almighty, spoiling the Egyptians, and acting for the Lord in the day of vengeance.

N. C. This is your time: and so you may say what you will against Christ's "witness-bearing people," while they are in their "sackcloth condition." It is now only their "witnessing-time," but———

C. But what? Why do you make a stop?

N. C. The times will mend, and the witnessing-time, they say, will be over.

C. You would have me think then that you speak their sense, not your own: but I perceive you are a little taken with those new phrases, of the witnessing-time, and witnessing-work. As indeed it was alway the humour of your party, if a noted man invented an unusual phrase, presently to form their mouths to that new mode of speaking; just like a pack of hounds, that when one begins to open immediately all follow, and almost deafen one with the noise. When a preacher, for instance, from that text, *David served his generation by the will of God*[u], raised this impertinent observation, "that it is our duty to mind generation-work;" instantly all pulpits sounded with this doctrine of generation-work. That was the phrase in those days: insomuch that you should hear both minister and people bewailing it in their prayers, that they had not minded generation-work more. Which made some good innocent souls, that were not acquainted with the secret, blush when they first heard it, and wonder what they meant. And to say the truth, that was a hard matter to tell. For the presbyterians, I think, meant nothing but reforming according to the covenant, the Lord having given them such an opportunity, as the General Assembly speak in their Answer[x] to the Declaration of the Parliament of England. Where they tell them, that "when the supreme Providence gives opportunity of the accepted time and the day of salvation, no other work can prosper in the hands of his servants, if it be not apprehended, and with all reverence and faithfulness improved." And withal, they add, "this kirk when the Lord gave them the calling, considered not their own deadness, nor staggered at the promise through unbelief, but

[u] [Acts xiii. 36.]

[x] Presented 25th August, 1642. ["The Answer by the Generall Assembly of the Kirke of Scotland to the Declaration sent by the Parliament of England; extracted forth of the booke of the Generall Assembly by Sir Archibald Johnston of Worueston, knight, clerke thereto," forms the fifth paper (p. 6.) of the series headed "A Declaration of the Lords and Commons," &c. cited above, p. 529.]

gave glory to God. And who knows but the Lord hath now some controversy with England, which will not be removed, till first, and before all, the worship of his name, and the government of his house be settled according to his will?" This was their generation-work. But others meant by this phrase, the pulling down every thing that they imagined antichristian, presbytery and all. And some went so far as to think it was generation-work to pull down monarchy, "to bind kings in chains, nay, protectors in fetters of iron." And when they were not able to do the last, though they had effected the other, then they fell to witnessing-work, and prophesying against it; for that was the commonwealth's men's phrase, when they spoke of O. CR. himself. "The Lord's faithful people, the foolish contemptible nothings, irreconcilable enemies to the government of a single person, were putting up their prayers and appeals to the Lord, witnessing and prophesying against him, and the boast-like foundation on which he stood[y]," &c. For the setting up of him, you must know, was in their opinion the "healing the deadly wound of the beast[z]." Though by others who were for generation-work too, and thought themselves as great promoters of it as they, he and his son were called Moses and Joshua, or David and Solomon, as you may see in several addresses made to them. But above all commend me to the good people of Chard in Somersetshire, who bless that providence who had given them "such a Joshua to conduct them to the land of promise[a]:" another phrase as hard to explain as the former, but as greedily swallowed and made use of by your wretched phrase-mongers, to abuse themselves and the nation. In short, all the whole gang thought God was fulfilling prophecies, and making good the revelation, and they must help and be instrumental to him in this generation-work; else they might be shut out of the land of promise, and not enter into the New Jerusalem. There was no man of this

[y] True Catalogue, p. 12. [See p. 461, above.]

[z] Ib. [p. 9.]

[a] The address from those at Leicester was much to the same purpose. [Ibid. p. 38. They "humbly beg at the throne of grace that as his (Richard Cromwell's) renowned father (who as a designed instrument helpt them out of Egypt, having Canaan in his eye,) was then called to Mount Nebo to die there, yet he as another Joshua with his fathers spirit redoubled upon him, may by the efficacious conduct of the captain of the Lord's host lead them into a more full possession of truth, righteousness, and peace, as their desired Canaan."—ib. p. 43.]

sort, who had never so little power, were he but a petty constable, or the like officer, but he imagined he heard God saying to him, as Mordecai to Esther, "Who knows but thou art raised up for such a time as this?" Nay, those whom you count the soberest persons were so drunk with this conceit, that they fancied themselves or their friends to be angels pouring out vials, or some such thing. Mr. Edwards, I remember, who with so much zeal and courage encountered all the sectaries, and gave a particular reproof to one Durance, who prayed that the king might be brought to the parliament in chains; fell into this dotage himself, peremptorily to affirm, that God would honour their brethren of Scotland to be instruments of pulling down the sectaries. "They shall all fall before the Scots," saith he, "whom they have so vilified and unworthily dealt with, as the prelatical and popish party did." Which he proves from Revel. iii. 8, 9, 10. All those promises to Philadelphia, he assures you, do in a special manner belong to our brethren of Scotland, as "first, that God will make them come (i. e. those who are the antitype to those Jews, the Sectaries, Anabaptists, Independents, that whole faction[b]) and worship before their feet, and to know that God hath loved them; that is, they shall overcome and triumph over those sectaries, &c. O church of Scotland, and all ye that are for reformation presbyterial against the sectaries, nourish your hopes by these things, neither let your hearts be troubled, whatsoever the world speaks against you." And so he interprets the story of a drum beating in an Independent congregation, as a signification that the war which the Independents thirsted for with the Scots, "as much as ever an unhappy boy did to be at fisty-cuffs with one of his fellows," would "prove their ruin, and be a means to overthrow all their conventicles[c]." Though alas! quite contrary to his expectation, the sectarian army beat the Scots to dirt, subdued the whole nation, brought Philadelphia into bondage, and made her worship at their feet. And yet Mr. Burroughs, I observe, one of those Independents Mr. Edwards writes against, seemed, when time was, to have the same opinion of the Scottish brethren; and to foresee glorious things that they would do. For he tells the citizens, "Certainly that nation is a nation that God

[b] Gangræna, second part, p. 193, 194. [4to, Lond. 1646.]

[c] Gangræna, third part, p. 165. [4to, Lond. 1646.]

doth love, a nation that God doth honour, and by whose many expressions of his love, sheweth that he doth intend to make them special instruments of the great things he hath to do in this latter age of the world[d]." And it should seem, he read this in the Revelation too; for he adds, "We may truly call it Philadelphia." And Mr. Brightman (that famous light in former time, thirty or forty years since) did parallel the church of Philadelphia with the church of Scotland. "Philadelphia signifies brotherly-love; when was there ever a nation, such a church that joined together in such firm covenant as they have done? Had we the like union among us, O how great things had we done before this time!" And then he tells them that it is a nation engaged to God in a higher, more extraordinary way than any nation upon the face of the earth; a reformed nation; a people that have risen up against antichrist more than ever any people have done, and that is the great work of God in these times: and therefore certainly God hath a love to them, because they break the ice and begin the work, and arise in such a way as they do for the pulling down of the man of sin. I suppose he means they arose in the way of arms, and resolved not to lay them down till they had finished the work of the times. What that was, Mr. Burroughs tells you, though the word Antichrist now signifies nothing certainly, but what every one pleases. And Mr. H. Wilkinson tells the parliament of England what it is, in the same terms. "Your business, saith he, "lies professedly against the apocalyptical beast, and all his complices[e]." "The birth with which you travail, as it was the expectation of antiquity and ages past, so it will be the happiness of posterity and ages future. Think not that it is in the power or compass of devils or men to make that birth prove abortive, which himself hath undertaken to bring forth, and to baptize with the name of Israel," it being a child of promise, Isa. lxvi. 9. *Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause*

[d] Speech at Guildhall upon the occasion of the coming in of the Scots. [P. 28 of "Foure Speeches delivered in Guild-Hall on Friday the sixth of October, 1643, at a common-hall, upon occasion of desiring the assistance of our brethren of Scotland in this warre, viz. the 1. by Mr. solicitor (Sir T. Gardner,) 2. by Mr. Edmund Calamy, 3. by Mr. Jeremiah Burroughes, 4. by Mr. Obadiah Sedgewick; published accordingtoorder,"—4to, Lond. 1646.]

[e] Epistle before his sermon preached 25 Octob. 1643. [Referred to above, p. 529.]

to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God. "No," saith he, a little after, "God hath spoken the word for the restoration of Sion, and building up the walls of Jerusalem, and therefore let your faith hang out its conquering and triumphing flag, and let Emanuel be the motto."

Thus you see what both the great parties thought was the work of the generation: and what fine work they have made of it; there being a greater growth of antichristianism of all sorts since that time, than ever we knew before. You see likewise what work they make with the Holy Scriptures; and that it had been a great part of the work of that generation to pervert and abuse them. And withal you see what is become of their high confidence that they should not miscarry in their designs upon us, whom they baptized with the name of the "complices of the apocalyptic beast." Their hopes are proved abortive; and now they are travailing with a new wind, and are in pain till they bring forth a lie. They that were triumphant a little while ago, have taken in their flag and changed the motto. Now the word is *Ichabod,* 'where is the glory?' They have altered the phrases very much, and speak in a complaining tone. After so glorious a progress in the work of pulling down Babylon, and such assurance they should have the beast under their feet; they are cast back again, and are but at their witnessing-work, and prophesying its destruction. Now Mr. Bridge tells us, "This is the work of our generation, witness-bearing to the truth of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist in antichristian times. This is the work of our generation[g]." Good lack! that the world should be thus turned upside down: that their hands should be lately at the work; that "the carpenters should be at work in every part of the kingdom to cut off the horns[h]:" and now they should have no work but for their mouths! Witness-bearing work is all the business. Strange! "The work of the time," said Mr. Bridge above 20 years ago, "is to measure the temple." Nay, "we are upon the work of reformation, building the temple[i]." He saw the "measuring line" in

[g] Seasonable Truths in evil times, p. 100. [Works, vol. iii. p. 345.]

[h] Mr. Bridge, Sermon before the Parl. Nov. 29, 1643. [vol. iv. pp. 326.]

[i] Ib. p. 24. [p. 338.]

the parliament's hand: yea, the stones were going to be laid; and all the fear was, they should not lie even. But now all is vanished, a new vision appears; the church is hidden, the inner court is not to be seen, and the holy city is still trod under foot, and they are got no farther than witnessing-work. Then "the work was to cast out the Gentiles[l];" and now the Gentiles remain within, and "the work is only to witness against them[m]." "This is the work to which a thousand years of glory and comfort is promised. This is the work; witness-bearing to the truths of Christ, in opposition to the ways of antichrist;" as he tells over and over in his late sermon[n]. Do you not wonder at this; that the work was so long ago to cast out the Gentiles, and the word was given forth, "Up and be doing, and do it fully? Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently; and withholdeth his hand from shedding of blood[o]?" but now they are only witnessing, and "waiting for the power to turn the nations into war and blood[p]?"

N. C. They are grown very humble.

C. No. This is but a new proof of their insufferable pride. They will not ingenuously acknowledge their errors. They are still as bold and confident in prophesying from the Revelation, as if they had never been mistaken. And you feed and encourage their presumption, while you admire these dreamers; and suffer them to lead you quietly by the nose backward and forward, just as they please. The cause of which, I doubt, is your pride too; who are resolved not to be ashamed of your vain hopes, nor abate your confidences; but surrounding yourselves with prophecies and promises, to harden your faces, and look as boldly upon us as ever. The world must not think you have missed the mark; but only suppose you have received a farther light, and that the mind of God is more fully revealed; and that now you have found certainly in the Revelation whereabouts we are. Or rather, many of this sort make no reflection upon what is past. A new phrase is able at any time to blot out all remembrance of former things. Let them but get this by the end, and there is no other talk; no other thoughts. Away go all objections and difficulties, all doubts,

[l] Ib. [p. 332.]
[m] Seasonable Truths. [p. 345.]
[n] P. 101. Seasonable Truths, printed 1668. [ibid.]
[o] Sermon before the Parl. [p. 332.]
[p] [Seasonable Truths, p. 362.]

scruples, and fears: all sad thoughts, if they have any, vanish as soon as they hear this; and you may quiet them with it when you will, as you do a child with a rattle when it cries. Lord, say they, it is witnessing-time. How shall thy poor creatures go through this witnessing-work? Alas! Christians, says another, when he meets his friends, we are fallen into the witnessing-days; "Bear your testimony:" fear not their faces, only let your testimony agree. "If you would bear witness, unite your testimony[q]." O, it is a "sackcloth condition," replies a third, let us "mind the duty of a sackcloth condition," let us "wear our sackcloth handsomely." Aye, and then saith a fourth, "Christ will pay all the charge that you are at in witness-bearing. If a man have a suit at law, and have five or six witnesses, and carry them an hundred miles, he bears all the charge of their witness-bearing. Saith Christ, *I will give power to my witnesses, they are my witnesses.* Ye are Christ's witnesses; and look, whatsoever charge you are at, he will bear the charge, he will bear all the charge of your witness-bearing. And therefore be faithful in your witness-bearing[r]."

In this manner they are lulled asleep, and tickled out of the remembrance of all things past. Nothing else comes into their minds, nothing into their mouths, as long as the strength of these new phrases last. And their ministers having found the admirable power of them, and how they stick in their fancies, and work there, and wholly possess them; they will not fail to furnish them with good store of them, when there is occasion. And should they but change a certain word now in use into one of these phrases, I believe it would help to do their business very effectually.

N. C. You will not teach them, sure, in this art. What do you mean?

C. Preaching, you know, hath been a word long in use among us, and nobody needs be told what we mean by it. But this being an old phrase, there were some that grew weary of it, and changed it into *teaching*. And for some time, Who *taught* to day? was the phrase. But this growing common fell into dislike too; and so they call it *exercising*. And when this became stale also, and pleased them no longer, then I re-

[q] Seasonable Truths. [p. 347.]

[r] [P. 363.]

member some called it *lecturing*. But this would not take, and so *speaking* became, in a manner, the only word. And among the most pure, the question still was, Who *speaks* here this morning? But afterward this was changed too, into Who *holds forth?* and what was held forth by him to day? A great many more such alterations, it is like, you can remember, who are better acquainted with these matters than I. But I was going to tell you, that if any man should have the conceit to call it *witnessing* or *prophesying;* and this phrase should get among them, Who witnesses to day in such a congregation? or Who prophecies in your meeting? or Will you go hear Mr. A. B. C. bear his testimony to day? no doubt it would take wonderfully; and make a rabble run like mad to hear what new thing this witness-bearing is. For such is the silliness of this people, that they imagine with every new phrase, there is some new thing to be learnt; and that the old preachers are nothing to the new teachers; and they who hold forth have something more to say, than he that only speaks. And therefore what will they fancy there to be in prophesying, and witness-bearing? nothing less, I warrant you, than a clear discovery of the things that lay hid from ages and generations; the opening of seals; the numbering of the years, and unlocking all the secrets of the Revelation. And though they understand never a word, yet they will believe themselves marvellously enlightened, when they are well stuffed with phrases; and are able to talk of "generation-work, witnessing-times, shutting up heaven, and commanding that it rain not, turning the waters into blood, and such like things:" especially when they can fancy themselves to be witnesses, and to "have power given them to prophesy, and to send fire out of their mouths to devour the adversaries[s]." This is comfortable doctrine indeed, that they can but open their mouths, and out come "scorching and devouring judgments, at their prayers, to blast and destroy us all." If this fancy get into their heads, it will be sure to keep them in heart, and blow up their furious zeal to a greater heat. And if ever they chance to reflect on the miscarriage of their former hopes wherewith they were big, they will then have a trick ready at hand to salve the

[s] Vid. Seasonable Truths. [p. 359.]

business, that it shall not discourage their present confidence. It was only because they were not hot enough, and did not open their mouths wide enough, and breathe forth fiery and devouring prayers against the enemy. And therefore now they will call to one another as Mr. Bridge teaches them, and say, "Christians, is there a fire, a fire in your mouths? O you that have any credit in heaven, pray now[t]."—"What? Doth fire come out of the mouth of the witnessing-people of God to devour their enemies, and will you shut your mouth and not pray?—O you that are witnesses, now open your mouths, for fire proceeds out of your mouths to devour the enemies that hurt the witnessing-people of God: open your mouth wide; and you that never prayed, pray now[u]."

Thus they open their mouths, but shut their eyes, and will not see how they have been deceived. They maintain their confidence by these arts; and are all agreed in this, never to agree with us. They must have war with Amalek for ever. And though they "have many differences," as Mr. Bridge acknowledges, "and are divided into many opinions and persuasions;" yet if they agree in this one thing, which is the main, to unite their testimony against us, it is enough. This shall bear up their spirits, and make them hope, though they clash and jar in a thousand things. Let but their witness against us agree, and their hearts shall not fail; but they shall still talk as if they were infallible.

N. C. I was loath to be so uncivil as to interrupt you too much in your career: but you have drawn your discourse to such a length, that it would weary your friends, were they here, as much as vex your enemies.

C. I did not intend so many words: but my thoughts ran so nimbly before me in this argument, that feeling no weariness in myself, I never reflected how much I might tire you. Pray pardon me.

N. C. Well, it is done now: and I will not begin it again by making any reflections on what you have said: but this I must needs say, that Mr. Bridge was always held a very precious man, one that hath a deep insight into the things of God; much enlightened in the knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, and of long experience in his ways: and therefore I confess,

[t] [P. 364.] [u] [P. 360.]

I much wonder at these things, and am troubled that he should write on this fashion. Yet say what you will, there are those who will follow and admire him.

C. Do you think I am so simple as to doubt of it? When I consider, as a French gentleman once said[v], "how there are scarce any kind of beasts, which hath not heretofore been adored mong idolaters; nor any diseases incident either to body or mind, whereunto antiquity hath not erected temples; what should make me wonder at so small a thing as this, that divers men have those in high esteem, who are no ways deserving? It is no marvel, if simple people hold sots in high reputation, since they have addressed their incense to apes and crocodiles." There are those, I have been told, who prefer the neighing of an horse before the sweetest and most musical voice of singing-men and singing-women; and others that have thought the smell of garlic to exceed the best perfumes: why should I think it strange then, if there be such men found as are more moved with the knockings of hoops, and walloping of milk, and such like sounds, than with the still voice of the clearest and most harmonious reason? In short, I am not forgetful of the proverb, that "the purblind is king in the blind man's country."

N. C. I looked when you would bring forth a proverb again.

C. And is it not significant? I think it deserves to stick in your mind more than any of your phrases.

N. C. But I always thought, whatever you judge of us otherways, that you had all allowed us to be the most knowing people in the land.

C. Yes, in your own conceit: but otherwise you have discovered the greatest folly. For you would never hear instruction: but alway tickled yourselves with this fancy, that you had the work of God in hand; and that what you designed was the very mind and counsel of the Lord; who would never let it miscarry, but bring all your thoughts to pass. Otherways, you need not have been in this condition wherein you are. For I can tell you who forewarned you of it in print five or six and twenty years ago, and bade you take notice of these words: "If it shall come to pass that in point of reformation, what formerly was proffered by the sovereign and re-

[v] [Balzac, lettre 25. liv. iv. à Hydaspe;—Œuvres, p. 680. 8vo, Par. 1633: Baker's translation, p. 134. 8vo, Lond. 1655. From the same letter is derived the anonymous passage cited above, p. 507.]

fused by the subject, shall hereafter be requested by the subject and denied by the sovereign; we shall have leisure enough to admire God's justice, bemoan our own condition, and instruct our posterity not to outstand good offers; lest for want of seeing their happiness, they feel their own misery." But you have no spare moments, it seems, to admire any thing but yourselves; nor to bemoan any thing but that you do not still sit in heaven, the place of judicature, to which you thought yourselves advanced; and are so far from instructing posterity in any true wisdom, that you would have them think the greatest happiness we can next desire is to see the still nation turned to war and blood. The old saying was, that if things were to be done twice, all would be wise: but you———

N. C. Pray leave off your old sayings, we do not understand matters of policy and human wisdom: but in the things of God sure you will not deny us to have a spirit of discerning more than other folk.

C. In the Revelation you mean, and the ancient prophecies: in witnessing-work, and the work of the generation. In which indeed you have discovered a marvellous skill; and shewn that you can see as far (you will needs have it farther) into a millstone than other men.

N. C. I am sufficiently convinced that we know no more of those secrets than you: but there are a great many other, you know, beside those, in which it was ever thought we were well seen.

C. Now perhaps I guess at your meaning. You have great skill in expounding the works of Providence, though not in interpreting prophecies; and can give the reason of those misfortunes which befall some particular persons, contrary to the express sentence of our Saviour, Luke xiii.

N. C. Those very words of our Saviour deter us from passing rash censures.

C. Do they so? How came Mr. Vicars then professedly to handle this argument? and not only tell stories of God's hand upon malignants, but expressly affirm, "this was a direct judgment of the Lord for desperate malignancy; and that, a clear evidence of God's undoubted indignation[x]?" And how came

[x] Looking-Glass for Malignants, or God's hands against God-haters. [Referred to above, p. 487.]

Mr. John White to license this desperate book; but that you thought you might do any thing to promote the cause, because it was the cause of God? This makes you still compose prophecies to amuse the credulous, and fill the nation with the noise of prodigies, to set the timorous into a fit of trembling. When your troubled imaginations present you with a throng of dismal thoughts, then you thunder out judgments against us; and when any unusual thing befalls any of us, then you instantly cry out, See the hand of God! Behold how the Lord plagues them for our sakes! You know I do not lie. There are two or three whole books writ since the king's return, that will witness against you if you should gainsay me. And so would Mr. Vicars, who hath nothing to affrighten neuters withal but such tales as this; that a certain malignant, being filled with terrors on his deathbed, repented of his crime, obtained assurance of pardon from the Lord; saw Christ himself in a vision, who told him he had a cause on earth, and that the parliament of England defendeth it, and shortly none of those wicked ministers, that had misled God's people, should be left among them.

N. C. I renounce all those books, and hate that the cause should be served with such stories of God's judgments.

C. I wish it be because Christ taught you better, and not merely because experience hath a little instructed you, that this weapon may be turned against you, and wound your side as well as ours. I myself could tell you strange but true misfortunes that have befallen some of your way, which I will not interpret to the justifying of our cause or the condemning yours. I will only remember how you were wont to clamour, if any man took notice of unusual calamities upon any of you, and to cry Blasphemy, blasphemy! though you were so prone to cry Providence, providence! when the like betided any of us. Mr. W. Bridges, for instance, when the converted gentleman spoke of some remarkable strokes upon three great persons[y], whose

[y] ["Nor is the providentiall hand of God more visible in prospering him, then in punishing his enemies; whose ruines may remaine as seamarkes to us, and pyramids of God's power; whereof a touch.

"Sir John Hotham, then governour of Hull, who first defied and dared his sovereign to his face, what is become of him? How stands he a marke betwixt two dangers, having nothing left him, but guilt enough

names I will not so much as mention, replied in a great passion; "Surely, were not profaneness and blasphemy as toys and trifles among you, you durst not speak, much less print such blasphemies as these. Solomon saith, that all things fall alike to all, and the same condition (in regard of outward things) is to the just as to the wicked: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. There is one event to all[z]." For my part, I embrace this doctrine with all my soul; for a greater than Solomon hath taught me not to construe events according to my own fancy, and as will best promote and justify my opinion: only I wish you would not alter your mind when the persons are altered, and make one rule for us and another for yourselves.

N. C. No. You and I are well agreed in this.

C. Thank you for nothing. When you see that which you took to be a sharp sword prove but a wooden dagger, you throw it away. Such is the great wisdom and knowledge you brag of. You first furiously lay about you, not regarding whether you hit friend or foe; and when you have hurt both alike, then you repent and say, you will do so no more. I pray God you be as good as your word. But I much fear you will prove like king Saul, who when he heard David was in Keilah, said, *Now God hath delivered him into my hands, for he is shut in a city that hath gates and bars*[a]. And though he saw he was deceived, yet grew never a whit the wiser; but when his enemy was in a new strait, concluded again that God had entrapped him, and would not let him again escape his

to make him capable of a desperate fortune.

"Master Hampden, that first waged law and then war against his own naturall prince, hath not he (since these unhappy troubles began) bin first punished with the losse of children, nay visited to the third generation, to the weakening (if not ruining) of his family, and then with the losse of his own life, in the same place where he first tooke up armes against his gracious soveraigne? Was it not remarkable that the lord Brook, who so often excepted against that clause in the lyturgie, 'From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us,' was slaine so suddenly? who was so severe an enemy against peace should perish in the same warre he so encouraged? who so bitterly inveighed against episcopall government, should be so shot dead out of a cathedrall church? who labouring to put out the left eye of established government, his left eye and life were both put out together?"—Loyall Convert, p. 14. Referred to above, p. 474.]

[z] Answer to Loyal Convert, p. 21. [Bridge's Works, vol. v. p. 346.]

[a] [1 Sam. xxiii. 7.]

vengeance: according to the old saying, They that have forward desires fall into dreams, although they do not sleep.

N. C. We have done, I assure you, with expounding the meaning of God's providence; and shall not pry any more into his hidden counsels.

C. Very good. What piece of knowledge then have you to brag of more than others? Unless you mean some secrets which you keep to yourselves: "special and extraordinary excitations and Christian inspirations, to make a reformation without the calling of the supreme magistrate," as Mr. Saltmarsh's words are: an inward call from God giving you leave to break his law, or as Mr. Bridge expresses it, to make a change, but not in a legal way. This I confess is a trick, but no such mystery; a new device, but no great secret. There is none of us all but can easily learn it; and that we do not, is not because we have not so much wit, but because we have more conscience.

N. C. Nobody ever pretended to such knowledge.

C. Yes, but there did. Mr. Saltmarsh confesses that the early setting forth of private men in the work of reformation is apt to exceed to a tumultuous motion: yet for all that "he would not put them so far behind, as that they should lie, like the lame and diseased at the Pool of Bethesda, waiting till a supreme power come among them[b]. No, there are many public engage-

[b] Animadv. (on Mr. Fuller's Serm.) dedicated to the Assembly. [Thomas Fuller, the church historian, having preached a sermon on Reformation, which he afterwards published, was considered to have maintained doctrines savouring of popery, as well as breathing too decided a spirit of loyalty to the king.

Among other animadversions upon his discourse, there appeared "Examinations, on a discovery of some dangerous positions delivered in a Sermon of Reformation preached in the church of the Savoy, last fast-day, July 26, by Tho. Fuller, B. D., and since printed;" by John Saltmarsh, Master of Arts, and pastor of Hosterton in Yorkshire.—4to, Lond. 1643. Fuller upon this defended his former arguments in a pamphlet under the title of "Truth maintained," in which he challenged Saltmarsh to reply; who however declined further controversy, assigning as his reason, "that he would not shoot his arrows against a dead mark," being erroneously informed that Fuller was dead.

Saltmarsh was descended from a respectable and ancient family, so named from the place of their abode, Saltmarsh in Yorkshire. He was educated at Magdalene College Cambridge, under the patronage of his kinsman, Sir John Metham. Fuller describes him as a person of a fine active fancy, no contemptible poet, and a good preacher; but no friend to bishops and ceremonies. About the year 1641, he became minister at Northampton, afterwards at Brasted in Kent, and at length

ments which they are capable of, and which Providence will often guide them unto; as in finding outways of facilitation and advancements for the business; besides some other *arcana* and secret preparations." What these outways were, into which a man might lash and so skip over many difficulties, he leaves us to guess. You may be sure they are not the common high road of the King of heaven, as the reply tells him. His *arcana* also he keeps to himself, as if he were one of heaven's close committee, and so bound to secrecy. But the most likely person to disclose these mysteries and reveal the *arcana* (if he be not sworn to secrecy too) is Mr. Bridge, of whom you may inquire. And perhaps he will think himself much beholden to you for teaching him a new phrase which he hath not yet used; "outways of facilitation" of the great and hard work now at hand. These outways will do knight-service, when they come to the business of restraining the higher powers, and turning the still people to war and blood.

N. C. You are resolved, I see, to lead me out of my way, and to take one occasion or other to divert me from the main business.

C. We are in our way yet. But I was going, I confess, to lead you to the dancing on the ropes, and then indeed you might have taken occasion to complain.

N. C. I think you are out of your wits. Can you tell what you were going to say?

C. I was thinking with myself, what outways the dancers upon the ropes could find; to whom Mr. Bridge compares reformers. They have no outways, sure, but what may endanger to lead them out of the world.

N. C. Would you would rest awhile and take a nap, for I

was chosen to the office of chaplain in Fairfax's army. His sentiments in favour of the war and the execution of the king were strong and undisguised, and at one time subjected him to animadversion from the house of commons. He was a mark for the malevolent witticisms of Edwards, who, in his Gangræna, offers the anagram upon his name, "to a tittle, M.al's trash," (part ii. p. 156.) Saltmarsh published an answer to his remarks, in which he retorts, "For your anagram upon my name, you do but fulfil the prophecy, *They shall cast out your names as evil, for the Son of man's sake.*" His death, of which he is said to have delivered some strange prognostications, occurred Dec. 11, 1647. It appears from Saltmarsh's writings, which are numerous, that he was deeply embued with the principles of Antinomianism.—Fuller's Worthies, vol. ii. p. 519. Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 571. Brook's Puritans, iii. 70.]

doubt you have heated your brain by this long discourse, and so begin to talk idly.

C. I understand myself well enough, and call to mind that I should indeed have said 'walking,' (which is more becoming the gravity of reformers) not dancing on the rope. For his words are these, (when he is exhorting the parliament to lay the stones of reformation with most exactness,) "You see, that when a man walks upon the rope, he carrieth a pole in his hand to sway him, and he looks diligently to his feet, because if he fail he cannot mend his miscarriage. And I say, that in this work of reformation, if there be the least slip, it will be a hard thing to recover it, when once a nation is settled in that miscarriage. Surely therefore the work is to be done with the most exactness[c]."

N. C. Well, and doth he not say true?

C. I should indeed have considered, that outways are only to facilitate your getting the work of reformation into your hands. When you are about it, then outways are dangerous. All must be done by the rule and by line, (or in a new phrase, by rope,) according to the word. In brief, I recollect now that this is the outwaying time, in order to those better times of walking upon the rope. But I pray, what was it that I diverted you from?

N. C. Oh, now I see you are come to yourself. And will you then ever hear me speak a sentence or two more?——I thank you for this small silence. You have snapped, of late, at my words too hastily, and cut me short in what I was going to say, which was plainly this. We observe the multitude that run in your way to be a company of blind ignorant creatures, that have scarce a drachm of the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the mysteries of our religion. Nor do they care to know these things, but only content themselves to come to church and say their prayers, and learn their catechism, and hear perhaps a sermon, which they presently forget. Whereas our people are very inquisitive after knowledge, and can discourse rarely of matters of religion, and repeat sermons; and besides, are very careful to know the pure gospel way of worshipping God. And, truly, when I consider things well, I can-

[c] Sermon before the Commons, 29 Nov. 1643. [p. 21, 22. Reprinted in his Works, vol. iv. p. 336.]

not but wonder how sottish many of your comformable creatures are, who never scruple any thing, and would, without all doubt, conform to the grossest superstition and popery, should it be enjoined. But we are very tender and solicitous, as you yourselves confess, to have pure ordinances, and to know the very mind and way of God.

C. I perceive you have little or nothing more to say of this matter, therefore I pray let me tell you what I think. I cannot deny that many of our common people are very ignorant; nay, they themselves are sensible of it, and will confess it. But I must add, that yours are generally ignorant too, only think themselves very knowing. Now, which of these think you are the worse; they that are ignorant, but humble and void of self-conceit; or they that are ignorant, but very proud and conceited of their knowledge? nay, bold and confident of their own skill, taking upon them to instruct their betters, to dispute with our ministers, and that as if they were their equals, if not superiors; without any respect to their learning or office? For I must tell you withal, that as to their duty towards God and man, a great number of those on whom you bestow only your pity, and esteem ignorant creatures, have more understanding, at least more conscience than many of those that sigh over them.

They are more reverent in their devotions and addresses to God; more respectful in their behaviour to his ministers; more obedient to their governors; more humble and modest before all their betters; and, as far as I can see, more just and charitable toward all men: and therefore are in a better disposition to learn more, and increase in knowledge, than your prating self-conceited people. And if there be such effects as these of the little knowledge that you despise, and few better fruits than talkativeness, malapert contradictions of their elders, censuring and contemning the ignorance of others, from that great high knowledge which you boast of; I would fain know which of these you judge are like to be most saving. But of these things perhaps we may have occasion to discourse some other time. As for the rest, I flatly deny that your people are more knowing: for of those that are the most earnest for pure ordinances, gospel-worship, and cry out upon our liturgy, nay, abhor it as superstitious, popish, idolatrous, &c., there is not one

in a hundred that knows what those words mean. Be but so true to yourself, and studious to understand men aright, as to ask the next you meet, and bid them deal plainly and freely with you, what popery, superstition, or will-worship is; and I doubt not you will find they are like a company of pigs running after an old sow, (which falls a grunting,) squeaking and making a fearful cry, they know not for what.

N. C. You use a very homely similitude.

C. It may pass well enough in common talk, and was the first that came to hand to represent the rude and senseless noise which the multitude make with those words, only by imitation.

N. C. But you compare them to swine.

C. No, I only compare their cries together, which are both alike unreasonable. Do but ask, for instance, what they mean by popery, and some of these ignorant zealots will tell you, it is to do that which is practised in the church of Rome; which is no better than the voice of a brute. If this be popery, all our religion is popery. We must turn Jews or Turks or Pagans, that we may not be papists. And yet that will not do neither, for this popery will still be found among us, that we pray and give thanks to God, which are actions common to all the world with the church of Rome.

N. C. You need not have spent one word to confute such a gross conceit as this.

C. True, but this sottish definition of popery you will be sure to meet withal from some, if you will but take the pains to inquire. Others it is like will tell you, that it is popery to do any thing after the manner that the papists do: and then we must never kneel, nor lift up our eyes or our hands, nor meet together in a church.——

N. C. Why do you fetch such a sigh?

C. I sigh to think of the intolerable blockishness of those people that will pretend to know all the mysteries of God. For others, who think themselves more wise than the rest, will tell you that to use any ceremonies in use among them is certainly popish. And then we must use none at all, (and so make no outward expression of religious devotion, which must be done in some manner or other,) or else they must be such as are confessedly absurd and ridiculous. Nay, all civil ceremonies and customs will be forbidden us in time by these men. At

least for every thing that they hate, this shall be the name, popish, antichristian, or Babylonish. For O. C. himself, I well remember, could not be carried to his grave without their clamours, that it was "a needless, chargeable, popish funeral solemnity;" because there was "black velvet, a bed of state, and a waxen image[d]." Nay, let monarchy look to itself, for that is popish and antichristian too in such men's opinion, and this kingdom one of the ten horns of the beast. And down shall my lord mayor go also, (when they are able,) as an image of that government, together with all the pomp and foolery which attends him; as their words formerly were.

N. C. I hope there are no such dangerous persons now among us.

C. It is well if there be not. But you will certainly find some who will tell you, that all ceremonies invented by the pope are popish; and think themselves much wiser than their neighbours, if upon this ground they furiously rage against our church. But the best of it is, that this is nothing to the purpose: for none of ours were invented by him. The cross was used among Christian people long before the name or power of the pope was heard of: and so was kneeling, and white garments, and bowing the body in adoration of our blessed Saviour.

N. C. But I have heard some say, that it is popish to do any thing of this nature but what is prescribed by the word.

C. This is as sottish as all the rest; for it supposes both that nothing may be done in or about the worship of God, but what we have a command for in holy Scripture; and that the pope and his followers, are the only persons who have done any thing not prescribed there: else why should they call it popish or Romish, more than patriarchish or Greekish?

N. C. Is not the supposal true?

C. No; all the ancient Christians did many things in divine worship appointed by the scriptures, for which they had no particular prescription there. Nay, such is your ignorance, you yourselves do so too, and never mind it. For what direction is there to make a new prayer twice or thrice a day? And one prayer before the sermon, and another after? To receive the

[d] True Catalogue, p. 15. [See p. 461, above.]

sacrament of Christ's body and blood in the morning, and not after supper? To deliver it into the hands of every person that receives it, with prayer for him, or exhortation to him, or both?——

N. C. Pray stay; you will let nothing at all be popish, if you be let alone; at least nothing of this nature.

C. Yes; we are taught by our divines, that to ordain such a multitude of ceremonies, as will employ most of our thoughts and care in time of divine service how to do them aright, deserves that name. Or if we make any of them an essential part of God's worship, or give them power to obtain pardon for us, or work grace in us; or, lastly, if we make them apostolical and necessary commands that bind the conscience as the laws of God do: then call them popish and antichristian, or what you please.

N. C. You say well, and I confess I know a little more than I did.

C. O that you would help to reduce those silly, and many of them, I hope, well meaning souls; who through mere ignorance and blind prejudice, are departed from the grave and sober way of serving God among us, to follow their own vain fancies; and perhaps conceit they are witnessing against popery and the ways of antichrist, that is, against they know not what.

N.C. I am not come so far yet, nor hold myself able to witness against such persons; but this I can say, that all is not popery which is so called.

C. Nor superstition neither; though with the same doltish ignorance they charge us with that vice which they are most guilty of themselves, and do not know it; as appears by what I told you at our last meeting.

N. C. They like not your definition of superstition.

C. That is because they like nothing that we say; and because it makes them so plainly guilty of that which they condemn. But do they like Mr. Calvin's definition of it better?

N. C. What is it?

C. You may have met, it is possible, with his Institutions, for they have been long in the English tongue. There he tells you, almost in the beginning of the book, that as religion hath its name from 'binding,' and is set as contrary to wandering liberty; because it binds men up, and prescribes bounds and

limits to them, in which true piety consists: so superstition hath its name from going beyond all measures, being a humour that will not be bounded nor limited; or as his very words are, "that not being contented with the manner and order prescribed, heapeth up together a superfluous number of vain things[e]." Do you like this, I say, or no? If you do, then I will show you that as in prayers, so in other holy duties, your humour is to keep no measure nor order, but to heap up one superfluous thing upon another. No set form can content it, no limits or bounds can hold it; but it is still inventing something new to please yourselves and others; and then you fancy God is pleased, because you are. I know you have a conceit that you keep yourselves within the limits of the word, and that you dare not for a world stir beyond the confines which God prescribes; but this only makes your ignorance appear the more gross, as I will plainly show you.

N. C. I guess by what you said the last time whereabouts you will be, but it will turn us too much out of our way to enter into that discourse at this time.

C. Well then, I will let it alone till you give another occasion; and the rather, because I would have you go as soon as may be, and ask what *will-worship* is? That is another word in these witnesses' mouths, of as much efficacy and as little sense as all the rest; for when they are angry, they charge one another with it as well as us. The Independents were wont to say, that it was will-worship to set up the office of ruling elders in the church: and I can shew you one that calls the church-covenant, requiring men to give some signs of grace, and all the way of admission of members into independent congregations, by the very same name. And therefore I believe you will soon leave such to wrangle it out, and go and ask some others, what they mean to bawl so against forms. But

[e] ["Religionis nomen, etsi vere scite que Cicero a religendo deducit, coacta est tamen, et longe petita, quam assignat ratio, quod probi cultores sæpius relegerent, ac diligenter retractarent quid verum esset. Potius existimo vagæ licentiæ opponi hoc nomen; quia major pars mundi quicquid obvium est, temere arripit; imo etiam huc et illuc transvolat: pietas autem, ut in firmo gradu consistat, sese intra fines suos relegit. Sicuti inde mihi dicta videtur superstitio, quod modo et præscripta ratione non contenta supervacuam rerum inanium congeriem accumulet."] Calvin, Instit. lib. i. cap. 12. [§. i. p. 23.]

I believe there is not one of a thousand can give a reason, why he may not as well accuse the whole frame of nature, as our liturgy upon this account. Especially if you tell him that there is nothing in heaven or earth but hath a form: that when we understand, it is by forming some conceptions in our mind, and that we form our speech or words to make our conceptions understood by others. And therefore even your prayers must be in a form, or else they are senseless stuff, a mere noise and sound that nobody can understand.

N. C. We are only against set forms.

C. And so many of your prayers have none at all; but are then thought most heavenly when they are most confused; and to have much of God in them when they have nothing of man. For the common word is, "I like not forms, &c. He still sticks in forms: he is a dull formal man;" which are phrases as set and stinted as our prayers. They are never out of use, but repeated an hundred times a day. No repetitions they think are bad, but only of the same prayers; nor any other constant forms unlawful, no, not of railing and reviling, but only those of divine service. These they leave to the wicked, and take the other to themselves.

N. C. Pray do not say so.

C. I must say more than that. They hate a form of prayer, but love to pray in these reviling forms of speech. For they tell God how a "superstitious and antichristian way of worship hath justled out his own institutions; that men worship the graven images of their own inventions; that Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek are risen up against them." And the people are taught to go and spread their anger and threatenings before the Lord; and to tell him, that it is "an angry time, a persecuting time;" "a day of great wrath; abundance of anger and wrath, and hatred and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God at this day[f]:" or as Mr. B.'s language is in another place, "Now popish men have laid their net privily for us; and we may go to Christ and say, *Lord, pull us out of the net that they have laid for us, for thou art our strength*[g]." And, for any thing I can see, much of that they call the power of prayer consists in such forms as these.

[f] Seasonable Truths, p. 180, 182, 184. [Serm. vi. vol. iii. pp. 403–5.]

[g] Fulness of Christ, p. 37. [vol. v. p. 38.]

N. C. Alas! you know not what that power is.

C. I know it is just such another word as *form*, which they use without any certain sense, as they are wont to do the apestle's words concerning a *form of godliness without the power of it.* This *form of godliness* if you will believe some, is "praying by a set form[h]," and then the *power of godliness* must be praying without one.

N. C. It cannot be.

C. It is as I tell you. And this is one of the reasons that the world hate the saints; for that "the saints are a praying people." You must not mistake: "forms of prayer they can endure, but the power of prayer they cannot bear." They are Mr. B.'s words[i].

N. C. No indeed, not if it consist of such railing language as you speak of; but neither you nor I, it is like, apprehend his meaning.

C. Do you know what he means when he gives this for another reason of the hatred of the world to the saints; that they "destroy their gods, destroy their idols; men of all things cannot endure to have their gods destroyed: now the people of God do destroy the gods of the wicked, no wonder therefore that they are so provoked against the saints and people of God[j]?"

N. C. Not I.

C. Then you are very dull. He means our worship, which they are wont to rail upon in those terms also, calling it idolatry, worshipping the golden calves, and setting up new gods; which are such rude and beastly clamours, that I am loath to foul my mouth with naming them. They are only vile and abominable phrases, which every ignorant wretch can serve himself of, when he lists to reproach his neighbours. At first the presbyterians called conformity to the innovations (as they were styled by them) "worshipping the golden calves." Afterward the Independents called the directory the "golden calves of Jeroboam[k];" and affirmed that this order to help in

[h] Answer of the Ministers of New England to the first Position, p. 2. [See pp. 457, 494, above, for an account of the controversy which led to this publication.]

[i] Seasonable Truths, p. 168. [Serm. vi. p. 395.]

[j] Ib. p. 167. [p. 394.]

[k] Edw. Gangr. part i. [p. 36.]

the way of worship was a breach of the second commandment. Nay, Mr. Burton[1], one of the witnesses, said, that to make a law about religion was to set up the golden calves, or Nebuchadnezzar's image: or, if you will have another phrase for it, "to choose new gods; and then was war in the gates," as an independent preacher said at Chester[m] when they were about to choose lay elders. But to be even with them, the presbyterians threw those phrases back again in their faces, and asked the five brethren, "Is the golden calf of independency and democracy come out of itself, without Aaron's making it[n]?" And in conclusion, one Web (as the same man tells us) called the Scripture itself "that golden calf and brazen serpent which set at variance king and parliament, and kingdom against kingdom," and said, "things would never do well till the golden calf and brazen serpent were beaten in pieces[o]." No wonder therefore if the same man said, "the Scottish nation was the Babylonish beast[p]."

N. C. I should not have been offended if you had called such men as these 'beasts;' and said they bellowed or brayed (or what you please) against your worship, speaking evil of those things which they know not. But you are not ignorant, I hope, that we have a more knowing people than these, who are truly religious, and mind serious things.

C. What is this to the purpose? I ask for a pickaxe, and you bring me a spade. We are not talking of some select persons, but of the multitude; which I affirm are grossly ignorant. Yet since you lead me to it, I must tell you there are serious as well as slight follies; and I have reason to think there are divers of those who are more sober than those we now spoke of, and pass for very knowing Christians, that have small skill in any thing but phrases. For what greater token can there be of ignorance, than either not to understand what a man means, or else to slight and undervalue what he says, if he declare the doctrine of Christianity in plain and simple words? nay, to complain as if religion were lost, and the gospel gone, if we leave off their forms of speech and beloved phrases?

[1] ["Conformitie's Deformity,"—p. 13.]

[m] [Mr. E. (probably Samuel Eaton.) From certain letters written to Edwards, p. 63.]

[n] Antapologia, p. 188. [See p. 503, above.]

[o] Gangr. part i. [Certain letters, &c. pp. 54, 75.]

[p] Ib. [p. 55.]

N. C. Now I scarce know what you mean.

C. Do you not remember what a noise and clutter there was, when Mr. Baxter began to speak more intelligibly about some weighty things in Christianity than others did?

N. C. Yes, very well. Some thought he taught a new way of religion, and led us from Christ to the law again.

C. The reason was because he put them very much out of the road of their phrases. This made them fear Christ would be taken away from them, and free grace be despised, and a covenant of works restored. And for the very same cause they raise such a dust now against many of our ministers. They do not hear them talk of 'getting into Christ, and getting an interest in Christ;' and that for this end they must 'get faith, and go to the promise, and eye Christ in the promise, and close with him in the promise, and lay themselves flat upon the promise, and go out of themselves that the promise may enter;' all which you think are very mysterious things, because you are ignorant; for let all the sense that is contained in any of these forms be delivered in proper, plain, and easy words, and you despise it as a thing of nought. Though you talk of 'gospel light, and gospel discoveries, and gospel manifestations,' yet there is little or nothing all this while to be known or understood. Religion you will have to be such a mystery, that if a man thinks he understands it, he ought to conclude he is not acquainted with it. It is a certain sign a man hath no skill in it, if he imagine he knows the plain meaning of it. It must be looked upon as a great something; a thing to be stared at and admired, but no body knows what: at least you cannot clearly discover it to us, notwithstanding all the brags we hear of light and discoveries.

Hence it is (which is a great argument of their ignorance) that great numbers of your religious people have been so easily perverted and turned to the wildest sects; whenas the clearest reason that our men can speak will not convince them. What multitudes have soon turned Anabaptists, Antinomians, Familists, and Behemists; but how few, and with what difficulty, can be brought to the Church of England! This is an evident proof to all considering men that they can be made in love with any thing but only reason; and that a disciple of Jack pudding shall lead greater troops after him than the gravest divine.

They will sooner listen to a fancy, and are more ready to embrace another pack of new phrases, than the soberest sense, and the wisest instructions that can be spoken.

There is a famous and undeniable instance of it in the other, and, as you think, the purer England. Was it not a wonder that "the whole church of Boston (some few excepted) should become converts on a sudden to a daring woman, and be infected with her damnable opinions[q]?" And that, though they were esteemed "wise, sober, and well-grounded Christians;" and some of her opinions also had "the whole current of Scripture against them?"—Nay, they looked upon her as a "prophetess, (such were her spiritual gifts,) raised up of God for some great work now at hand, as the calling of the Jews," &c.; "so as she had more resort to her for counsel about matters of conscience, and clearing up men's spiritual estates, than any minister (I might say all the elders) in the country." This they impute to the craft of this "American Jezabel:" but I have reason to think the truer cause was the ignorance of these knowing people, who were easily cheated by her new phrases, and soft doctrines concerning "free grace, glorious light, and holding forth naked Christ[r]:" especially with such

[q] You may find these very words in the Proceedings of the General Court holden at New-Town, [in the Massachusetts in New-England,] Oct. 2, 1637, against Mrs. Hutchinson [Mr. Wheelwright, and other erroneous and seditious persons for their disturbance of the public peace] and others, p. 32. 40. 65, 66. [From "A Short Story of the rise, reign, and ruine of the Antinomians, Familists, and Libertines, that infested the Churches of New England, and how they were censured by the Assembly of Ministers there: as also of the Magistrates proceedings in court against them," &c., with a Preface by T. Welde, 4to, London, 1644. Reprinted in 1692.

For a clear and impartial account of the Antinomian contest in the colony of New England, of which Anne Hutchinson was the prime originator, encouraged by her brother John Wheelwright, and Henry Vane the governor, their fundamental tenets being the paramount authority of private judgment; the reader is referred to Bancroft's history of the United States of America, chap. 9. vol. i. p. 386–394. It ended in the banishment of that party from the territory of Massachusetts, and their establishment of the settlement of Rhode Island; where the foundress met a violent death at the hands of the Indians, in the year 1643.]

[r] Vide Mr. Weld's Preface, and Error 25. 33. 38. 48. 71, &c. [The first part of the work consists of "A Catalogue of such erroneous opinions as were found to have beene brought into New-England, and spread underhand there, as they

pretended mysteries as these, that "Christ is the new creature;" that we may "have all graces and yet want Christ;" that "there can be no true closing with Christ in a promise that hath a qualification or condition expressed;" that "conditional promises are legal," and therefore "no true comfort can be had from them;" that "to act by virtue of, or in obedience to a command, is legal;" that "to evidence justification by sanctification or graces, savours of Rome;" that "the witness of the Spirit is merely immediate, without any respect to the word or concurrence with it;" that "the seal of the Spirit is limited to this immediate witness, and doth never witness to any work of grace, or any conclusions of ours." And finally, "that the immediate revelation of my good estate, without any respect to the Scriptures, is as clear to me as the voice of God from heaven to St. Paul[s]."

N. C. There was witchcraft sure in the business.

C. Yes, of "sweet doctrines," and "glorious phrases:" the pleasing murmur of "mysteries" and "spirituality," of "immediate sealing and witnessing;" of "revelations and manifest-

were condemned by an assembly of the Churches, at New Town, Aug. 30, 1637."

The court visits with its denunciation eighty-two errors, and nine 'unsavoury speeches' attributed to the Antinomian party.—Pp. 1–16.]

[s] [Robert Baillie, in his "Dissuasive from the Errours of the time," thus sums up compendiously the leading tenets of the sect formed by Mrs. Hutchinson, which he corroborates by authentic testimonies. "They did avow openly the personall inhabitation of the Spirit in all the godly, his immediate revelations without the worde, and these as infallible as Scripture itself. This is the vilest Montanism. They avowed further, with the grossest Antinomians, that no sin must trouble any child of God, that all trouble of conscience for any sin demonstrates a man subject to the covenant of works, but a stranger to the covenant of grace; that no Christian is bound to look upon the law as a rule of his conversation; that no Christian should be prest to any duty of holiness. Neither here did they stand, but went on to aver the death of the soul with the body; that all the saints upon earth have two bodies; that Christ is not united to our fleshly body, but they would have him to be united to our new body, with the same union wherewith his humanity is united with his Godhead: that Christ's manhood was not now in the heavens, but that his body was his church... Concerning the hypocrisy of these heretikes, it was exceeding great; none appeared so humble, so holy, so spiritual, and full of Christ, as they. In their speech, nought but self-deniall; in their prayers, ravishing affections, and heavenly expressions. All their singular opinions were for the advancing of free grace, for the glorious light of the gospel, for the setting up of naked Christ on his throne."—p. 61.]

ations" of the Spirit. These bewitched the "wisest and soberest and well grounded Christians," (because in truth they were ignorant, and stood upon the ground of fancy and imagination,) who would have stopped their ears like the deaf adder to the charms of sober reason, should a man have charmed never so wisely. Nor could they ever be disenchanted by all the arguments and persuasions of all the ministers in that country, but "she kept her strength and reputation even among the people of God, till the hand of civil justice laid hold of her; and then she began evidently to decline, and the faithful to be freed from her forgeries[t]." So wholesome sometime is a little severity, and so much is the force of civil authority with these people above the sharpest arguments of divines. For they opposed the Spirit, and their manifestations and illuminations, to all their minister's reasons, which would do no service at the bar of the court of justice, where they understood none of this language. And now I speak of the manifestations of the Spirit, it is very strange to me, that you should generally expect the Holy Ghost should do for you, what Christ promised at his parting to the twelve apostles, *teach you all things, and guide you into all truth.* It is another sign of great ignorance in you, and of insincerity, I doubt, in many of your ministers, who are afraid to dispossess you of this conceit, and to instruct you in the plain difference between these times and those; but suffer, if not teach you, to apply to yourselves whatsoever our Saviour spoke to the apostles alone. A thing which is so palpable, that I cannot but wonder men should so pervert the scripture, especially when they see there is no such thing, but that those whom they account the people of God, are of several, nay contrary minds; and that all cannot be in the right, and yet none they think devoid of the Spirit, *to teach them all things, and lead them into all truth.* This sure makes so many think every strong and unusual motion they find within them is the work and operation of the Spirit of God; and that every place of scripture that comes on a sudden into their mind, is darted from heaven and the immediate dictate of the Holy Ghost, though never so impertinently applied to their present occasions; and that all the ardent affections, and transports, and raptures they have in prayer or at other seasons, are likewise inspirations from above, and that now they are filled with the Holy Ghost;

[t] Ib. pag. ult. [p. 66.]

which is a gross and ignorant conclusion, in my opinion, for want of such obvious considerations as these; that such heats and flights are common to them with the heathen poets and excellent orators, and that bad men have had them as well as the best: as I am able to show you, if you please.

N. C. Some other time, if you will, for we have spent now a great deal in this kind of discourse.

C. Let me tell you notwithstanding, that this, I believe, is one reason that your people are filled with so many doubts, jealousies, and fears of being deserted. When they have not these heats, then they think the Spirit is gone; and how to comfort them it is hard to tell, till they return again. And now I mention this, give me leave to tell you it is another evidence of great ignorance, that the minds of well meaning and honest hearted people among you are full of so many scruples, and so uncertain what to resolve on all occasions. You may say perhaps it is because their consciences are tender, and very careful and wary what they do; and so you may say, when you see a blind man tremble and walk softly, and feel his way at every step with his staff, that he is a very wary man; when it is not caution, but his want of sight that makes him so diffident. And indeed how is it possible they should have any true assurance in any case, when it is so hard, if not impossible, to be resolved in the great question of all, what a man must do to be saved, and attain the satisfaction of knowing that he hath an interest in Christ. To this the most admired divines reply, that a man can have no comfort but only by going to the promise. "O, but," saith the poor soul (according as it is taught,) "I dare not so much as look to the promise, I cannot believe it[u]." To this the answer

[u] Mr. Tho. Hooker's Poor Doubting Christian drawn to Christ, p. 30. ["The Poor Doubting Christian drawn to Christ; wherein the main lets and hinderances, which keep men from coming to Christ, are discovered, with speciall helps to recover God's favour; by Tho. Hooker, late of New England."—London, 8vo, 1667.

Thomas Hooker, born at Markfield in Leicestershire in the year 1586, was one of the most distinguished of the fellows of Emmanuel college, Cambridge, by whom the principles of non-conformity were prominently upheld in that university. His early convictions, deeply tinctured with a sense of sin and of personal demerit, seem to have led him to a religious state bordering on despondency, the effects of which are traceable in numerous portions of his later writings. Having at length however attained a less gloomy condition of belief, he resolved to devote himself to the min-

is, (p. 115,) that a man "shall never believe on these terms," if he look to have faith before he go to the promise. "For thou must not have faith, and then go to the promise; but must first go to the promise for the power of that faith: from it thou must receive power to believe." But then how shall the soul go without faith? will a promise do him any good unless he believe it to be the very word of God, on which he should trust? This is an unanswerable difficulty, as far as I can find. These divines cannot tell him how he should go to the promise, since it is confessed he must go by faith, and "if he look to have faith before he go to the promise," he will never have it. They only tell him over again, (p. 117,) and if it will do, well and good, that "we must not bring faith to the promise, but receive faith from it to believe." Thus the poor soul is sent to the promise for faith, and back again to faith to lay hold on the promise; but how to do that, who can tell? It must first go to the promise to fetch faith, and yet how should it go if it have no faith? In this case how should a man choose but be full of scruples, and like one that is bewildered and lost, not knowing what will become of him?

N. C. I have read the book, for it uses to be one of the first that is recommended to us; and, as I remember, he tells you a little after, how a soul may get to the promise.

C. I thank you for remembering me of it. He moves indeed

istry, and became especially successful in administering comfort to persons labouring under spiritual distress. His first labours were spent in London and the vicinity; but in 1626 he was chosen lecturer at Colchester, of which place one Mr. Mitchell was the incumbent. His dissent from the church gaining strength, he finally resigned his cure, and opened a school; the memorial of no less than forty-seven conformist ministers presented to the bishop of London on his behalf, not availing to obtain him permission to preach after his suspension. About the year 1630 he was bound in a bond of fifty pounds to appear before the high commission court, which however he was induced to forfeit, and made good his escape to Holland. Three years later he sailed for America, narrowly escaping from being arrested in England on the way, and settled first at Newtown, afterwards called Cambridge, then founded Hartford on the river Connecticut, where he expired, July 7, 1647. His writings are disfigured by the low puritanical taste of the time, but his ministrations were highly valued, and obtained for him the appellation, which reads like an echo of that of his great namesake, of "the grave, the godly, the judicious, the faithful, and the laborious Hooker."—Brook's Puritans, iii. 64. Cotton Mather's New England, iii. 58.]

that question[x]; but methinks he only leads a man into a worse labyrinth. For "these are the rules to be observed, how the soul may get to the promise. First, throw off all power and ability in thyself."..." Let the heart lie still, till the wind and tide and promise come, and that will carry thee." And yet the second rule (which immediately follows) is this, which contradicts the former: "Bring the promise home to thy heart, that the promise may bring thy heart to it." How is this possible? I would know how to get to the promise, and I am told I must lie still that the promise may come to me; and yet at the next breath I am sent to bring the promise home to my heart; which supposes I must go to fetch it. What case am I in now? What direction can he give me to bring me out of these briars? Why, to answer this doubt, the only way is to unsay this in the third rule, which supposes the promise will come of itself, and that I need not bring it home: for it runs in these words; "When the promise is thus come home to thee, and thou seest the sufficiency and the authority of it, then all thou hast to do is this; in the stream of that promise be carried home to the promise[y]."

N. C. I can make no sense of it.

C. Nor I neither; but the thing he seems to aim at is this; that a man must only wait till Christ assure him that he had made all the promises to him. For thus he explains the business. Jacob would not believe that Joseph was alive till he saw the chariots that were come for him. These sent from Joseph to Jacob, brought Jacob to Joseph. "So every believing soul is poor and feeble, disabled to go to God and to believe in the Lord Jesus; therefore he must look to the chariots of Israel first, (it should be of Joseph, according to the resemblance) and that will convey him to the promise;" and "when the chariots are come, get up into them; the Lord Jesus is gone to heaven and hath sent these chariots for thee; there get thee up, and say, Lord, take me up with thee[z]." And so they did: they got up into I know not what fiery chariots, and mounted into the air, and there fancied they saw the Lord Jesus immediately revealing himself to them; and so carrying them to the promise, the absolute promise. And I verily believe these doctrines were they from whence the American Jezebel (as they called her) extracted

[x] [Pp. 144, 6.]
[y] [P. 149.]
[z] Doubting Christian drawn to Christ. [pp. 148, 150.]

her poisons, and by which the people were prepared to drink of the *cup of her fornication;* persuading themselves that "a man is united to Christ, and justified without faith; that faith is not a receiving him, but discerning he hath received him already;" that "a man is united to Christ only by the work of the Spirit upon him, without any act of his;" that "there is a testimony of the Spirit and a voice unto the soul, merely immediate, without any respect unto or concurrence with the word." And that "there are distinct seasons of the workings of the several persons; so that a soul may be said to be so long under the work of the Father and not the Son; and so long under the work of the Son, and not under the Spirit." And in conclusion, that "a man is not effectually converted till he hath full assurance, and that this is given immediately; all the activity of a believer being only to act to sin." All these, I say, are the plain sense (if there be any at all in this book) of what he delivered in more obscure words.

N. C. Pray go not about to prove this; for my head begins to turn round already, merely with the scent of these intoxicating ingredients.

C. If these doctrines had been broached by any of us, you would have found out our picture long ago in the Revelation, and said that the church of New England was Thyatira, and this the Jezebel which called herself a prophetess; and that such divines as these were the *prophets of Baal*, the *priests of Jezebel*, and these doctrines the *doctrines of devils.* All which you might have done with a greater colour and show of reason than apply these names to our priests. But you are favourable to one another, and wink at such books as these, provided the authors be non-conformists, and cannot (as you ignorantly speak) bow to Baal.

N. C. I am glad there are none of these doctrines here in this England.

C. Those books are here, and highly admired by such sound believers as take all for gospel that some men say; but can find nothing of Christ among those that speak sense, and make the doctrine of Christ intelligible. Nay, I can find you disciples of such authors as these among your preachers; who will sometimes tell you that Christ will do all for you, and then tell you presently that something must be done by you. Thus one of them introduces the soul complaining, that "the

dugs of divine love are full, but I cannot suck. Answer, Be of good comfort, Christ will not only open his bosom, but thy mouth. Object. But I cannot fetch out the milk that lies in his breast; I am but weak. Answer, Christ is sweet; and with his finger he will force out the milk of mercy into thy mouth; if thou canst but open thy mouth[a]." What need he have made an 'if' of it, if Christ would open his mouth? and if he will do that and every thing else, why did he not make an end of the business in one word, and say, All the activity of believers is to act to sin? and so comfort the "believing ewes, who are big with young in a sinful sense[b]," and say———

N. C. We talked a little while ago of some men's bellowing and braying, and now you are going to fall a bleating.

C. You are very pleasant. I hope then it will not offend you, to let you know that I was giving you the explication which this man makes of those words in Isaiah xl. 11. *I will gently lead those that are with young:* that is, saith he, (according to the admirable way now in fashion of expounding the holy Writ,) "Christ will be very kind to those saints that step aside (which is called *whoring* in Scripture), and deal gently with those who are big with young in a sinful sense; whom, I was going to tell you, he comforts thus: "O ye sinning ewes, who have been big with young, hath not he gone after you, and found you, and laid you upon his shoulders rejoicing[c]?" "It may be thou hast been wandering like Dinah from thy Father's house, &c. art big with young, and afraid to go home: but fear not; go and try; he will not cast you out of doors. Though you come with big bellies, (to keep to the metaphor,) he will deal gently with thee, though with young[d]."

N. C. We have followed these ewes, or goats, or what you do please to call them, too far.

C. It is true: but at first I intended only to tell you how he describes weak believers; "who have, as divines say, the faith of adherence: they will stick to Christ as theirs; but they

[a] Sips of sweetness, or Consolation for weak believers, by John Durant, 1662. [p. 48. ed. 2. 8vo, Lond. 1652. See p. 292, above.]

[b] [P. 67.]

[c] Page 114. The very phrase of Mr. Hooker.—"Though thou canst not find the way to heaven, yet he will find thee, &c. and lay thy soul upon his shoulders, i. e. upon the riches of the freeness of his grace." [p. 149, 150.]

[d] [P. 119.]

want a faith of evidence, they cannot see themselves to be his." p. 18.

N. C. These divines speak nonsense.

C. Judge then in what uncertainty the disciples of these divines live, who never tell them plainly what faith is. And what a strange blindness they labour with, who cannot see (as they speak) that they are Christ's; though they persuade themselves that he is theirs. Nor do I see what satisfaction they are like to receive in particular cases, any more than in this, the greatest of all. Your doctrine seems to me to be so obscure, that it is hard to come to any solid settlement or peace of mind. One of your rules, for instance, is that we must have a warrant from the word of God for every thing we do: if there be neither precept nor practice that we can find there to justify an action we intend, it must not be done. This, without doubt, hath wofully ensnared your people's consciences, and is one great reason they are so full of fears and scruples: they have been taught not to rely upon impartial reason, but to seek still for a place of holy Scripture to be their guide and warrant. So Mr. W. Bradshaw (a famous divine, whose name I know you reverence[e]) confessed to Mr. Gata-

[e] [William Bradshaw, one of the most eminent of the puritan body during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, was born in 1574 at Market Bosworth in Leicestershire, was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and elected one of the first fellows of Sidney College. In 1601 he was appointed minister of Chatham, Kent, but expelled the year following for non-conformity. He subsequently held the office of preacher, by license of the bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, at Stapenhill near Burton upon Trent. He died at Chelsea in the year 1618. Among his numerous writings, he became conspicuous for his bold and able defence of his party, "English Puritanism, containing the main opinions of the rigidest sort of those that are called Puritans in the realm of England;" to which Dr. Ames wrote a preface, and translated it into Latin for the benefit of foreigners.

He was an intimate friend of Cartwright and Gataker, the latter of whom preached his funeral sermon; and contributed a biographical notice of him to Clark's series of Lives, appended to his Martyrology, pp. 25—60; in which he concludes with the following eulogistic character of him, from a letter of bishop Hall's: "He was of a strong brain and a free spirit: not suffering himself for small differences of judgment to be alienated from his friends: to whom, notwithstanding his seeming austerity, he was very pleasing in his conversation, being full of witty and harmless urbanity. He was very strong and eager in arguing, hearty in his friendship, regardless of the world, a despiser of compliment, a lover of reality, full of digested learning, and ex-

ker[f], that he was "often troubled to satisfy some in their cases propounded to him, though he gave them never so good reason for his resolutions; because they would not therewith be satisfied, unless he could produce some place in Scripture for every particular[g]." "Thus infinite perplexities, doubts, and scrupulosities must needs arise in men's minds (as Mr. R. Hooker[h] well expresses it) and stops and rubs without any end be cast

cellent notions: a painful labourer in God's work, and now, no doubt, gloriously rewarded."]

[f] Defence of his book of Lots, against Mr. Balmford. [In the year 1619, Gataker, then preacher at Lincoln's Inn, published, with a dedication to that society, his learned treatise, "Of the nature and use of Lots, a treatise historical and theological;" in which he discussed on philosophical and religious principles and with great clearness and breadth of reasoning, the doctrine of chances or casualty in general, and its application in particular to lotteries; and 'lot's lusorious,' or 'divintary,' their lawfulness or unlawfulness, and the caution to be exercised in the use of them. In the course of his remarks he is led to controvert the arguments advanced in an anonymous tract published some years previously, "A short and plain dialogue concerning the unlawfulnesse of playing at cards, or any other game consisting in chance; imprinted at London for Rich. Boile," 8vo, 1593. A second and enlarged edition of his work appeared in 1627. The first publication of the book involved its author in a public controversy of many years' duration. An angry attack was made upon him in "A Modest Reply to certain answers which Mr. Gataker, B.D. in his Treatise of the nature of lots, giveth to arguments in a dialogue concerning the unlawfulnesse of games; by James Balmford, minister of Jesus Christ, imprinted 1623:" to which he rejoined in "A Just Defence of certaine passages in a former treatise concerning the nature and use of Lots, against such exceptions and oppositions as have beene made thereunto by Mr. J[ames] B[almford]. Wherein the insufficiencie of his answers given to the arguments brought in defence of a lusorious lot is manifested; the imbecillitie of his arguments produced against the same further discovered: and the point itselfe in controversie more fully cleared; by Thomas Gataker, B. of D. and author of the former Treatise,"—4to, Lond. 1623.

About twelve years later, Mr. Gataker, having to contend against repeated attacks at the hands of opponents of greater learning and ability, thought it advisable to publish a defence of his sentiments in Latin, directed especially against the views of the learned casuist William Ames, and Gisbert Voet, the celebrated divinity professor at Utrecht, and opponent of Jansen, who had written on the same subject. His work, which abounds with copious erudition and curious thought, bears the title of "Thomæ Gatakeri Londinatis Antithesis, partim Gulielmi Amesii, partim Gilberti (sic) Vœtii de Sorte thesibus reposita." 1637.

The best account of Gataker is drawn up by himself in his "Discourse Apologetical" against Lilly, 4to. 1654.]

[g] [Quoted p. 145. of Gataker's Defence.]

[h] [Eccles. Pol. book ii. chap. 8. §. 6. vol. i. p. 335.]

into the course of men's lives concerning their ordinary and civil affairs, if the light of reason shall be suppressed; and men shall be constrained, burn it never so clearly, not to proceed by it in ought they are to do, till they have had solemn access first to the written word, and fetched light from some particular sentence in it, for the farther confirmation of them therein." And thus, I may add, the Scripture came to be basely wrested and bended from its proper sense and meaning, to serve their particular occasions. And, in their great ignorance, they went away better satisfied with a fanciful and impertinent application of it to their present business, than if the soundest reason in the world had been offered to them. Only this in time was the mischief of it, that by this means they found a way to justify unlawful actions, and supported their confidence in those ways, against the most evident reason. But it is possible you will not regard what I say, nor Mr. R. Hooker neither, being one of those you call blind and superstitious writers. Let me send you therefore to Mr. Calvin, who tells you that if you understand not your liberty about things in themselves indifferent, there will be no quiet in your consciences, no end of superstitions. "Many indeed think," saith he, "that we are fond to move disputations about the free eating of flesh, about the free use of days, and garments, and such other small trifles, as they think them: but there is more weight in them than is commonly thought. For when consciences have once cast themselves into the snare, they enter into a long and cumbersome way, from whence they can afterward find no easy way to get out[1]. If a man begin to doubt, for

[1] ["Videmur hodie plerisque inepti, qui disceptationem movemus de libero esu carnium, de libero feriarum vestiumque usu, et similibus, ut illis quidem videtur, frivolis nugis: sed plus istis inest momenti quam vulgo creditur. Nam ubi semel se in laqueum conjecerunt conscientiæ, longum et inextricabilem labyrinthum ingrediuntur, unde non facilis postea exitus patet. Si quis dubitare inceperit an sibi in linteis, indusiis, sudariis, mantilibus, lino uti liceat; nec de cannabe postea securus erit, tandem et de stupis incidet dubitatio; secum enim volutabit annon sine mantilibus cœnare possit, annon sudariis carere. Si cui paulo delicatior cibus illicitus visus fuerit, demum nec cibarium panem ac vulgaria edulia tranquillus coram Deo comedet; dum in mentem venit, se viliaribus adhuc cibis posse corpus sustentare. Si in suaviori vino hæsitaverit, deinde nec vappam cum bona conscientiæ pace bibet: postremo nec dulciorem mundiorem que aliis aquam attingere audebit. Denique eo demum veniet ut super transversam (quod

instance, whether he may use linen sheets, shirts, handkerchiefs and napkins, neither will he be out of doubt whether he may use those of hemp, and after that of coarser stuff. Nay, he will begin to weigh with himself whether he cannot sup without napkins, and be without handkerchiefs. If he think dainty meat to be unlawful, at length he shall not with quietness before the Lord eat either brown bread, or common meats, when he remembers that he may yet sustain his body with baser food. If he doubt of pleasant wine, afterward he will not drink even that which is dead with peace of conscience; last of all, he will not be so bold to touch sweeter and cleaner water than other. Finally, at length he will come to this point, to think it unlawful (as the common saying is) to tread upon a straw lying across. For the question is not light and small, being no less than this; whether God will have us do this or that, whose ill ought to guide all our counsels and actions."

N. C. I know none that are troubled with such idle scruples as these.

C. That may proceed from the dulness and shortness of their thoughts, which never let them see into what endless labyrinths their principles will lead them. I am sure such rules as these have been so improved by your ministers, that in an ignorant zeal they deny you your lawful liberties, and lay upon you unnecessary restraints; and on the other side entice you to hear controversies and all manner of doctrine; saying, that no part of the counsel of God must be suppressed, and conceiving the people would be defrauded if they were not admitted to these disputations. They make no difference, as my lord Bacon [k] observed long ago, between milk and strong meat; and to speak again in his words, (which now come to my mind,) what I said before in my own; they "seek to prove every thing by express Scripture," or else imagine it is not to

dicitur) festucam incedere nefas ducat. Non enim hic leve certamen inchoatur, sed hoc controvertitur an his aut illis nos uti Deus velit: cujus voluntas consiliis nostris ac factis omnibus præire debet."] Calvin. Instit. l. iii. [c. 19. § 7. p. 221.]

[k] Wise and moderate discourse of church affairs, printed 1641; since published in his Resuscitatio, 1657. [In the Resuscitatio it bears its present title, "An advertisement touching the controversies of the church of England,"—Works, vol. vii. p. 57. For the history of the tract, see the remarks of Mr. Montagu, preface, p. xx.]

be allowed; and then that constrains them to wrest it, and make "conceited inferences and forced allusions." And as for preaching, it hath been in a manner made necessary to sanctify every ordinance; which is another very ignorant conceit. There are many have thought, saith he, that it is "almost of the essence of the sacrament of the Lord's supper to have a sermon before it." This hath brought liturgies and forms of divine service into contempt; and made those to be despised who had not the faculty of constant preaching. As for those that could not preach at all, they have been always reproached by you in so strange a manner, that it hath been another occasion of corrupting our religion, and bringing the holy ordinance of God into contempt.

N. C. It is impossible: you should rather say the quite contrary.

C. Hear me a little and then judge. These poor men were in a manner constrained by your rude clamours to take upon them to expound the word of God, though very unable for it; and thereby exposed too early even preaching itself to the laughter and scorn of those that had some wit to discern, but no goodness to pity their weakness. They were loath to hear themselves called idle shepherds, that had mouths but could not speak a word from God; and so rather than endure this reproach, they entertained the people with their glosses, paraphrases, and discourses upon the holy Scripture; and called all the word of the Lord, though never so absurd and senseless. Silence, I confess, had better become them, than straining themselves to speak what they did not understand: but yet consider how hard it was to resist the temptation to open their mouths as oft as they could; whereby at once they might both avoid the contempt and odious brand of a *dumb dog;* and also get a great reputation, with the ignorant multitude, of an able, painful minister of God's word.

And as for those who had some abilities to expound the Scriptures and exhort the people, they were called upon with so much earnestness to *preach the word in season and out of season,* that they knew not at last what to preach. They were forced to step up into the pulpit and make a noise, when they had little or nothing to say: by which means the holy writings were applied according to their present fancy; and

handled in a very careless and superficial manner. A bold face and a ready tongue were fain to supply the place of good reason, and well digested thoughts. " Loudness (as Dr. Corn. Burges once told you) was made to serve instead of matter[1]." For they found if they were but earnest, the people accounted them very zealous preachers: and " imputed their want of matter to their wisdom and desire of edifying; not to their want of study or ability. And it was their custom to say, He preaches to the conscience, he stands not upon deep learn-

[1] Fire of the sanctuary uncovered, p. 310. [Cornelius Burges was descended from the Burgesses of Batcomb in Somersetshire, but the place and date of his birth are uncertain. He entered the university of Oxford in 1611, and on the first foundation of Wadham College translated himself thither, and graduated there B.A. He took his M.A. degree at Lincoln College. On Dec. 21, 1613, he was inducted into the vicarage of Watford, Herts, vacant by the deprivation of Antony Watson, on the presentation of Sir C. Morison, bart.; which preferment he was permitted by a dispensation dated Jan. 16. $162\frac{5}{6}$ to hold in conjunction with the rectory of S. Magnus the martyr, in London. The latter living he resigned in July 1641. In 1627 he was made chaplain to the king. To these he also added a lectureship at St. Paul's. Wood reproaches him with having deserted his first principles of zealous attachment to the church of England, and becoming scandalous towards his brethren, and schismatical, and one of the first to preach the lawfulness of taking up arms against the king in defence of religion. He was appointed by the lords under the long parliament one of the subcommittee for religion, and became the spokesman of the presbyterian party in their denunciations of deans and chapters, &c. Essex selected him to be chaplain to his regiment of horse. On the foundation of the Westminster Assembly he was nominated assessor, in conjunction with John White; where he argued against taking the Covenant, and refused taking it until he was suspended. In 1643 he was appointed by means of the militia of London (among whom, says Wood, the doctor used to ride with his case of pistols, and was called colonel) lecturer at St. Paul's cathedral, with 400*l.* a year pension, and the deanery for a residence. Enriched by this and similar advantages, he not only invested largely in the purchase of church lands, among others the bishop's manor of Wells, but even wrote an apology for such practice, " No Sacriledge nor sin to aliene or purchase the lands of bishops, or others, whose offices are abolished." On the restoration however he lost all his accumulations, to the amount of many thousand pounds, and retired to Watford, where he died in extreme poverty, June 9, 1665.—Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 681; Calamy, Account of silenced ministers, 586; Neal, iv. 369. Calamy in a letter to Echard, p. 107—11. labours hard to extenuate the unfavourable character drawn of him by Wood; but the truth seems to be that with much learning and extensive influence he was a man of worldly views and grasping disposition.]

ing: he reproves sin boldly;" and if it was other men's, not theirs, so much the better. For the very truth is, the people do not love to hear nothing but their duty; or to hear it frequently repeated. And some taught them in time to call this "legal preaching;" gospel sermons were then to be contrived; nothing but Christ and free grace to be preached. And because they grew weary even of hearing these so often over; there was a necessity to devise novelties, or else not preach so many sermons. The last would by no means be admitted, and so the Scriptures were to be squeezed, new notions invented, delicate new phrases coined, and indeed a new religion made to please the people.

Could it, for instance, have entered into the head of any man from those words of Isaiah before mentioned, to talk of believers being "big with sin;" and to make such observations as these, that "it is our glory to be Christ's ewes[m]," and that when a man is big with young, and cries, "O my belly, my belly," here is a point of comfort, that Christ is sweet to such persons? could a man, I say, have ever thought of such things as these, but that he was to strain the words as far as ever fancy could stretch them; because he must have soon done with the text, had he given only the proper sense of it; and the people hath soon done with him, had he not sought out some new inventions? They were at least to be courted with some sweet and endearing phrases, and called "O blessed ewes, O believing ewes, and O believing bees, that suck the honey of sin hatred out of the wormwood of sin acted[n];" and told that "Christ accounts their stammerings sweet; Meih, meih, saith the little one, and the mother counts it music." And so no doubt do the people count this puling sort of preaching. O he is a sweet man, says one; an affectionate man, saith a second; a melting preacher, saith a third; because he lays them to the dugs of Christ's love and bids them suck, or but open their mouths and cry meih; or if they cannot, assures them Christ will do it for them: not considering all this while that he entertains their fancy with the fulness and freeness of those breasts, and leaves their thoughts hanging and admiring there; merely because he is dry and empty himself, and hath nothing else to say.

N. C. O sir, we find that they are never drawn dry.

[m] [Durant, pp. 94, 5.] [n] [Pp. 127, 8.]

C. You must say so, who can fancy you drink up rivers when they give you but a sip: and see with much satisfaction "some sips of Christ streaming through a poor creature[o]." And, truly, as long as there are streams and beams, your poets will never want rhymes, nor these preachers stand in need of reason. For beaming and streaming will do the business at any time, and make them pass for extraordinary men; especially if they have the confidence to say, as this man doth, that "Christ's Spirit brought that text (Isaiah xl. 11.) to his hand; and that his soul hath tasted some sweetness by what Christ gave in upon that subject." For so you must believe, if you will be kind and sweet as he is, that "the Holy Ghost hath made him overseer of the flock of God," and bid him "feed his lambs," and that Christ gave in to him this sense of the prophet's words, that he will be "sweet to his believing ewes, when they are big with sin[p]." And indeed it is craftily done to entitle Christ to their dotages; for were it not for that, there are scarce any so stupid that would not despise them. But consider then how modest these men are, who had rather Christ and his blessed Spirit should bear the reproach of being authors of such absurd glosses and ignorant comments, than honestly acknowledge that they are the fruit of their own fancies; which would soon be drained, if they did not supply them with such inventions.

N. C. There is no danger of that; for they are very full men, as you have often heard me say.

C. So they are; very full of impertinent allegations of the holy Scripture, of tautologies, absurd resemblances, childish fancies, and false reasonings; and yet withal very full of confidence and self-conceit, which, to say the truth, you are all full of; a very few excepted.

N. C. You are full of wrath.

C. That is a part of your pride and self-conceit, to call truth by the name of wrath, passion, and bitterness; and to pretend withal, that whosoever speaks any thing against you is an enemy of God, unacquainted with religion, a formal, superstitious, or moral man. But take it as you will, and think of me

[o] Epistle to the Reader. [Prefixed to the work.]

[p] [P. 103.]

as you please, I say that, in my observation, there is scarce a drachm of that virtue called *modesty* to be found, I will not say in one, but in a whole country of you. You are generally full of yourselves, highly conceited of your own understanding; impatient of contradiction, insomuch that my lord Bacon tells us, he knew some of your way, who thought it a tempting of God to hear or read what might be said against them. By which you may see this is no new humour, but runs in the very spirit of the party; who cannot think that any understand so much as themselves of the things of God, and imagine the Spirit guides them, which must not submit to reason, and that no man hath any true goodness in him that is not one of them. Upon which account they ever supposed all men of whom they had any good thoughts, to be of their way in their hearts; nay, all other of any parts to be against them, merely for the love of the world. This I will evidently prove to have been a long time the humour even of your eminent professors, if it shall be contradicted. And it is the cause, I believe, that they complain so heavily, if any man reprove any of them: as if there could never be found even in good men something worthy of reproof; or as if that which we reprove in them were an undoubted part of their goodness. But they will take the liberty not only to reprove, but to rail upon us, as much as they please: and say, when they have done, as Mr. Saltmarsh did to the Assembly, "I hope you will pardon me, if zeal for the truth make me see another's faults sooner than my own[q]." Nay, the ordinary people among you have not the least respect to any of our ministers' understanding and skill, not to say his office and calling; but, as I told you before, will talk and dispute with him, and after that reprove and censure him, as if they were not only his fellows, but his judges. Whereas the very same men would take it extremely ill, should any minister take upon him to control or but direct them in matters of their trade, to which they have served an apprenticeship; though far more easy to understand in a short time, than the holy Scriptures in many years. Proud, saucy spirits! who undertake to teach those of whom they should learn; and slight, nay sit in judgment on those to whom they ought to

[q] Epistle Dedicatory before his book against Mr. Fuller. [Cited p. 546, above.]

give great honour, and to whose judgment in many cases they should quietly submit. "It was long since the zealous complaint of a holy man," saith C. Burges[r], "that 'men could no sooner get up their names in the world, and be able readily and confidently to muster up a few places of holy Scripture nothing to the purpose, but they thought themselves sufficient to encounter Moses himself, setting upon him as furiously as Dathan and Abiram ever did.' Happy were this age had it none of them. To whom it is in vain to say any thing; but to them whom moderation hath yet some hand over, I say this of the same ancient father[s]; 'Their contumacy, I beseech you, let us fly, their madness let us abhor, lest we perish with them in the same vengeance.'"

N. C. I confess I know some of this spirit, but you grant there are others of more moderation, that are eminent for their piety and all other things, who do not forget that they are men.

C. Our ears are almost deafened sometimes (as Mr. Rathband[t], one whom you valued, saith in another case) with the praise of some of these men's eminent learning, piety, sincerity, zeal, &c. "And truly I believe several of them are learned men, such as are modest, meek, humble, peaceable; and I judge them sincere. But there are great numbers joined with them who would be thought the most eminent, because most active in that way; who under colour of zeal of God's glory, hatred of sin, desire of serving God in sincerity, are thrust by an evil spirit that hath deceived them, into pride, self-love, rashness, unnatural affection, uncharitable surmises, and most unchristian judgment of their brethren."

N. C. Methinks you judge, and that very hardly, of others.

C. See your partiality, and that fond affection you have to yourselves, and one to another. Those are none of my words,

[r] Fire of the Sanctuary uncovered, p. 68. [See p. 571, above.]

[s] [Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἂν μικροῦ δοξαρίου τύχωμεν, ἢ οὐδὲ τούτου πολλάκις, ἀλλ' ὡς ἔτυχεν, ἢ δύο, ἢ τρία ῥήματα τῆς γραφῆς ἐκμελετήσωμεν, καὶ ταῦτα περικεκομμένως καὶ ἀνοήτως· τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο, ἡ αὐθημερινὴ σοφία, καὶ ὁ ἐν Χαλάνῃ πύργος, ὃς καλῶς τὰς γλώσσας ἐμέρισεν· καὶ ἀπονοηθῆναι δεῖ κατὰ Μωϋσέως, καὶ γενέσθαι Δαθὰν καὶ Ἀβειρὼν τοὺς ὑβριστὰς καὶ ἀθέους· ὧν φύγωμεν τὴν αὐθάδειαν, καὶ μηδὲ τὴν ἀπόνοιαν μιμησώμεθα, μηδὲ τὸ τέλος δεξώμεθα. — Greg. Naz. Orat. xxxii. Περὶ τῆς ἐν διαλέξεσιν εὐταξίας, cap. 17. tom. i. p. 591 B.]

[t] [See p. 439, above.]

but were long ago spoken by several ministers of yours, (who had some scruples indeed about ceremonies, yet never left our church,) against those that separated from it then, as you do now. Is not this to reject that very thing when it comes out of our mouths, which you readily receive when you hear it from one of your own?

But as to the business of judging others, since you mention it, and it is so much talked of, I openly declare that I judge no man in things indifferent, as you are wont to do; and as the Jews judged the Gentiles and St. Paul himself. But it is not indifferent whether a man be humble, modest, and peaceable, or no. Such I may censure, who, for instance, are disobedient to authority, and despise their betters and governors: and it is your great fault to censure even those that are obedient, and in things which they profess to believe to be indifferent. Is it like good Christians, think you, to call those superstitious, will-worshippers, complices of the beast, who declare they do not believe any ceremony they use to be any part of divine worship, nor necessary circumstances of it; but that they may be altered by authority, to which they are bound to yield obedience: and in the mean time to cry out on those who reprove you for downright opposition to authority, for clamour, evil-speaking, apparent pride, and such like things; which the laws of Christ judge and condemn, and tell us are manifest fruits of the flesh? You cannot think so (sure) unless your understandings be so strangely blinded by the love of yourselves, that the clearest truth cannot enter if it show you your errors. Indeed if a man merely omits to do those things that are commanded, but is not unruly, cross, clamorous, an opposer of laws, a maker of parties, and separate congregations, nor in any other behaviour unchristian; I think I ought to leave him to be judged by Christ, who searches the secrets of men's hearts, and who only can tell whether it be weakness of understanding, interest, humour, love of reputation, and such like reasons that keep him from obeying laws; or pure conscience and invincible ignorance. But if he be turbulent, a railer or reviler, a slighter of human laws, and a blasphemer of dignities; if he be one that makes divisions and offences, i. e. schisms in the church; not I, but the apostle judges such a man not to be a *servant of the Lord Jesus Christ*, but *of his own belly*. Which that he may

provide for, he gives good words, flatters the rich and the great, and is very compliant with all that he hopes to win to be his followers and friends: and he uses also *fair speeches* (or as Mr. Tyndal's translation hath it, "sweet preaching[t]"), he praises and commends those that follow him, he supposes them to be the people of God, and precious ones; he extenuates their faults and magnifies their good deeds, and so deceives the heart of the innocent, (as Mr. Tyndal reads it,) or of the *simple* people: read the place in Rom. xvi. 16, 17, where the apostle not merely bids, but beseeches them to *mark* or observe such men as these; and tells you for what end, that *they might avoid them.* But how is that possible, unless we judge that they are unfit persons for our company, and that walk not according to the rule of the gospel?

N. C. But you should judge then only for yourself, and labour to hide and conceal the faults or errors of your brethren, for *love covers a multitude of sins.*

C. "Love is to cover what sins may be covered; but some cannot be hid, they are so publicly committed; and others may not be hid though they could, because the concealment of them will do hurt to themselves and others, to the public and the private wealth. In which case it were both against piety, charity, and prudence to conceal them. And to that pass are things now come among us, that in both respects I think your courses are not to be covered. First, they cannot; at least in great part, being long since made public to the world, and daily are more and more, by your own printing, preaching, and private instilling them into others. Secondly, they may not if they could, seeing by forbearance all this while they have fretted like a gangrene into the bowels both of city and country: and I fear we have kept their counsels so long, that many of them are already past cure, and we almost remediless

[t] ["I beseeche you brethren, marke them which cause diusion, and geue occasyons of evill, contrary to the doctrine whych ye haue learned: and auoide them. For they y[t] are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but there owne bellyes, and with sweete preachynges and flatterynge wordes deceiue the hertes of the innocents."—The first edition of the New Testament by Tyndale, assisted by Roye, was printed at Cologne by Peter Quentell, 4to, 1525; a fragment of a copy of which is in the Grenville library in the British Museum. The second was published in the same year by Peter Scheyffer at Worms.]

in our rents, tending unto ruin." Nay, do not frown, as if I were too sharp and severe: they are not my words, but some of your own against the independent brethren[u], and may with as much or more justice be now applied to you all.

N. C. I think there are other courses more dangerous than those, that ought to be looked after. Profaneness, I mean, is the great thing which both you and we ought to set ourselves against; and that, I must tell you, abounds more among you than any where else.

C. I cannot tell——

N. C. What cannot you tell? Whether profaneness should be opposed by both with the greatest vigour?

C. Be not so fierce. First, I cannot tell whether profaneness abound more now than it did in the days when you reigned. I told you the last time what the assembly told the parliament of the sudden growth of wickedness since they began to sit, which sprang up (give me leave to tell you now) with the strange doctrines that then men took the liberty to teach. Mr. Gillespie hath given us a large catalogue of such as were current among that party, whom he calls the sectaries, and concludes it thus[x]; "It is informed, that among some of the sectaries of this time are found these tenents, that adultery is no sin, and that drunkenness is none neither, but a help to see Christ the better; and that there is no resurrection of the dead, nor no hell." And I am sure this abominable lewdness was not checked in the following years; but the Seasonable Exhortation of the greatest part of the London ministers complained no longer ago than 1660 of the great wickedness broken loose among us (which it seems was chained and bound up while the bishops governed); and, as a great instance of it, tell us in the conclusion of that sad lamentation, that "some (as we are credibly informed) are grown to that height of wickedness, as to worship the devil himself[y]." And then, secondly, I cannot tell whether the wickedness that hath so much abounded beyond that in elder days, be not in great part to be imputed to yourselves: for all the time you declaimed against the ignorance

[u] Narration of some Church Courses in New England, by W[illiam] R[athband,] p. 51. [4to, Lond. 1644. Postscript, p. 51.]

[x] Miscell. Questions, printed at Edinburgh, 1649. [chap. xiii. p. 168. Compare p. 386 above.]

[y] [P. 10. See p. 449 above.]

and blindness of the people, you "cast many fearful stumbling-blocks before them" (as an honest Suffolk man told you some years agone); while they "could not but see or hear your scornful censuring and condemning others; greedy panting after and gaping at the riches, honours, and preferments of this world; fraudulent circumventing and overreaching your neighbours; cruel revenge upon those you judged your enemies when you had power; bitter quarrelling and contending one against another: and yet notwithstanding all those sins, which might have justly caused you to lie in the dust, they saw you lifted up, boasting of the glorious times you had made, proudly appropriating to yourselves the honourable name of Christians, saints, and the godly party. Nay, the people were not so blind but they could see how you measured the saintship of yourselves and others, rather by some private opinions or small punctilios of worship, than by the great things of faith, righteousness, and mercy. For they found some men whose profession of Christianity was attended with these, accounted no better than civil men; while others were cried up for saints and godly, who were much deficient in them[z]."

[z] Mournful Complaint to the Knights and Burgesses of that County, 1656. ["Gemitus Plebis; or a Mournful Complaint and Supplication in behalf of the more weak and ignorant of the people of this nation. Drawn up for them by a friend, whose deep sense of his own ignorance and weakness hath taught him to be compassionate towards all that labour under the same infirmities; by C. Raie. Printed by R. Ibbitson, for Tho. Newberry, at the sign of the three Lyons in Cornhill, 1656." The author has prefixed to his appeal a dedication "to the honourable the knights and burgesses, chosen for this present parliament in the county of Suffolk:" dated "Wast. Sept. 1656."

"Yea," he complains to the ministers and watchmen of Christ, "though you do proclaim us blind and ignorant, yet you cease not to cast many fearful stumbling-blocks before us, whilst wee are inforced to see and hear from some of you, scornful censuring and condemning others, greedy panting and grasping at the riches, honours, and preferments of this world, fraudulent circumventing and overreaching others, cruel revenges upon those you judge your enemies, bitter quarrelling and contending one against another.

"And, notwithstanding these miscarriages, which might justly cause you with us to lye in the dust, joyntly bewailing our dreadful transgressions, yet we find you lifted up, boasting of the glorious times, proudly appropriating to yourselves the honourable names of Christians, saints, the godly party, not remembring the sentence of our Saviour in the case of the Pharisee and publican, or what he sometimes said to men, whose profession was as high as yours, when he saw them lofty. Publicans and harlots shall go before you into the kingdom of God. "That

Besides, your ministers took no care to catechise the youth in the country: nay, brought that ordinance into such contempt, that to this very day a man is not thought to do his duty, who spends the afternoons of the Lord's day in that instruction. They heard nothing but orations in the pulpit, morning and evening, and those (God knows) very sorry ones in most places. As for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, a great many honest-hearted people were frighted from it. You made such lofty rails (as he observes) about the table, that few or none of the poor people could come at it: as if you thought it a matter of great piety to confine the members of Christ's body to a little room, and cause his death and passion to be known and remembered only by a few: as if it were an honour to Christ, and an advantage to the world, that his name and memorial should perish from the hearts and mouths of a great part of the people professing his name, and engaged in covenant to him. Nay, in many places they never saw it administered to any at all for many years; your ministers choosing rather to deprive themselves and others of whom they had a good opinion of this heavenly banquet, than afford it to many well-meaning, though no talking people. And so while they complained of their living in known sins, they themselves lived many years in a notorious omission of this duty. Sometimes indeed they would invite men to this feast; but then by their preaching they hindered and discouraged the most if not all in a country congregation; as if they were too forward to acknowledge the benefits of Christ, and keep up his remembrance. In short, many of them accounted the people no better than heathen, and upon that score would not baptize their children; and thereby endeavoured to make them so, and quite thrust them out of the flock of Christ. O that you would all search your hearts, (as that honest man said,) to find out the true root of this spirit of separation, and observe nar-

"That you seem to us to measure the saintship of yourselves or others, rather by some private opinions, or some small punctilioes of worship, then by the great things of faith, righteousnesse, and mercy, because we find some men whose profession of the Lord Jesus Christ is attended with righteousnesse and mercy, yet accounts us no better than civil by diverse of you, whilst others are cried up for saints and godly, who are much deficient in these."—p. 16.]

rowly, whether under other specious pretences, or with some pious intentions, there were not a bitter root of pride and haughtiness causing you to affect singularity, and desire to appear alone to the view of men; thinking it below your worth to be found in communion with those, whom in opinion you have laid so much below yourselves.

But let that be as it will; thirdly, I cannot readily tell which are worse, the publicans and harlots, or the Scribes and Pharisees. This I know, that there have a long time been a great many of the last, who justified themselves, and looked upon all others as abominable. Dr. Cornelius Burges[a], I remember, tells us with a great confidence, that those who kept heretofore "such a frantic coil about ceremonies, and thought they never took their level right, but when at every bolt they shot they struck a bishop's cap sheer off his head; were more fantastical, ignorant, proud, self-willed, negligent and deceitful in their particular callings, than many whom they despised, and condemned to hell for carnal men; as any observing eye might easily discern." Now what to think of these men in compare with the other, let honest Martin Bucer tell you, who was one of the first reformers, and whose name I know you cannot but reverence as well as I on many accounts.

N. C. How do you know what Martin Bucer saith?

C. I understand a little Latin; and besides I have seen the latter part of his Comments on the Prophet Zephaniah[b] translated into our tongue; where he tells us, toward the conclusion, "That there were some among them under a pernicious mistake, abhorring only these gross things, to wear brave clothes, to fare deliciously, to drink and swill, to whore, to heap up riches carefully, to be usurers, and others of the like kind; but in the meantime arrogance, fastidious disdain of their brethren, to languish about frivolous questions, factions, reproach of God's word, slanders against his ministers, easily to believe lies, and being rashly believed (or perhaps by an evil suspicion suggested) to spread and scatter them abroad; these and such like things, saith he, pass with them sometimes for virtues. Nay, they think themselves thrice holy, while they walk about

[a] Fire of the Sanct. uncov. an. 1625. in the Preface. [See p. 571, above.]
[b] [P. 563. ed. Lat. fol. Par. 1554.]

with a stoical superciliousness, bended brows and sad countenance; while they wear mean clothes, and rattle all mortals in the ear, not so much with grave words as with claps of thunder; crying out, that all is naught and wicked. That which I have experience of, as he goes on, and have good assurance of its truth by certain observation, why should not I testify to the glory of Christ and the admonition of the brethren? Of those who abound so much in accusing the vices of others, whom every garment that is a little more neat, every little entertainment that is more plentiful, every word that is more merry and pleasant doth much offend, that are always complaining concerning the want of excommunication; I have found very few (that I may not say none) who do not labour with remarkable conceit of themselves, insufferable contempt of their brethren, incredible impatience of any neglect of them, and sometime with other more grievous evils. Besides that they are in a manner alway addicted to new and strange opinions, which tend only to schisms, and nothing to edification. Now heresy is a fruit of the flesh, and doth far more mischief than all drinkings, whorings, or adulteries. On the other side, among those persons whom they detest no less than heathens, because of a life more remiss, and the riches of the world, and a certain splendour or bravery; I have found very many, who as they acknowledge themselves obnoxious to sin, so they think of themselves most humbly, and of their neighbours most benignly: they are very candid in their thoughts, and equal in their judgments concerning others; always accounting themselves the worst, &c. And when the cross that they have deserved lies upon them, nothing is more patient than they, none hazard themselves more for the Lord. These things I have certain knowledge of, and why may I not declare them to his glory? And I call Him to witness, that in speaking this, I mean nothing less than to set any brand on a more severe mortification of the flesh, and renouncing of worldly things; or to encourage those that live remissly, or indulge any desire of the flesh: no, I pray the Lord that he would give me and all his chosen, grace to use still more sparingly the things of the body ourselves, that we may impart them more liberally to the poor. May we have grace also so to observe our tongues, that even a little idle word do

not escape us, but all that is ours may be directed to profit and edification. I have written these things, and annexed them to my comments (God knows) for no other cause, but that I might admonish the brethren who have the grace to live frugally and severely, and to be free from outward offences, first of all, diligently to watch the devil, lest he infest them with inward ones: and while he permits them to avoid those external vanities and delicacies, he bring them in love with inward and far more mischievous evils; that is, to please themselves, and to delight themselves in the condemning of others; and then to sport themselves, and play the wantons idly in novelty of opinions; from whence break forth openly grudgings and hatreds; then factions, sects, and unspeakable scandals in the church." That which follows I shall omit, as not being so much to my present purpose, (though otherways worthy of your notice,) which was to show what opinion wise and holy men have had of that spirit which now rules in you; and so conclude what we are to direct our zeal most against, and assault with the greatest vehemence. For your part, it is manifest you oppose conformity with might and main, and study by all means to keep up the separation: as for us, it is your desire we would set ourselves wholly against profaneness, and let you alone. But we cannot thus abandon ourselves, and throw off all care what becomes of our church. We hate profaneness, and are resolved to oppose it; but we hate pride and self-conceit, and faction and separation, and we are resolved to beat down these too. And I must tell you withal, that our blessed Saviour was more frequent and more severe in his reproofs of the Scribes and Pharisees, (how like you and those of Mr. Bucer's time are to them, let the impartial judge,) than he was of the publicans and sinners. And, whatsoever you think now, heretofore I am sure your ministers granted thus much, that the devil gains more by schisms than by coldness in religion; and that he had rather "draw men from their first love to a fiery and indiscreet zeal, than to lukewarmness and indifference[b]." For first, hereby he staggers many others who were well settled, and makes them children again

[b] Confut. of the Separat. agreed upon by many Ministers, and published by Mr. Rathband, 1644. [Preface of the authors of the treatise ensuing to the reader. It has been already quoted, p. 439 above.]

in understanding, and turns them about with every wind of doctrine; and secondly, he deprives those men of the happy means of recovery, which they might have easily enjoyed had they remained in the fellowship of the church. And would to God you would once more sadly consider, whether those many revolts that since the first separation have been made from your gathered congregations, to monstrous opinions and filthy practices, have not been a just punishment of you for your too high valuation of yourselves, and uncharitable separation from us. "What construction you make of such things we know not, (they are the words of the honest man I mentioned before,) but to us that are more ignorant it seems very strange, that whereas you fished with so great a mesh that scarce one of a hundred was taken by you and admitted into your churches; out of this hundredth part of yours, more should be found revolting to absurd, foolish, nay, pernicious opinions, than of the ninety-nine parts you left behind. It ought, in my poor opinion, to put you into a just suspicion and serious re-examination of that way, from which there is so easy a transition to so many dreadful delusions, and through which so many have already passed over unto the enemy[c]."

N. C. Let those examine who are most concerned in it. My mind is full of something else.

C. What is that?

N. C. You have repeated so often the schism, (as you call it,) or separation that is made from your church, that I perceive it is the great thing that sticks in your stomach, and which angers and frets you so much. And indeed Mr. Bridge told us it would do so, in one of those sermons you mention so oft. "The saints and the people of God," saith he, "they withdraw from the men of the world, and do separate from them...Now when we withdraw from men and from their worship, we condemn their worship, and the men of the world do not love to be condemned... To separate from them and from their worship, this they cannot bear. The saints do separate from them, and therefore there is such a deal of anger and wrath in their hearts against them[d]."

[c] Mournful Complaint. ["Gemitus plebis," &c. by C. Raie, p. 19. Quoted above, p. 579.]

[d] Seasonable Truths, Sermon vi. p. 166. [Works, vol. iii. p. 393.]

C. Alas! good man, doth he think we have such an opinion of him and his saints as they have of themselves? He flatters himself too much. It is one thing to imitate the saints, and another thing to counterfeit them. He shall never persuade me that quicksilver is better than gold, and that turbulent and affrighted imagination can be a surer guide either in the choice or exercise of our religion, than a calm reason, and a fixed well-resolved judgment. Let him call himself and his party saints a thousand times, or as oft as he breathes, it shall never move me at all; nor shall I think the worse, but the better of myself for being none of them. Let him pride himself in new devices, of a different worship for the saints and for the rest of the world; I am very well contented if they will but withdraw themselves far enough from us, and let us be out of the hearing of their gibberish. Let him lead them to the Indies if he please, and be separated from us by the wide ocean; it will be a great satisfaction to enjoy our worship quietly to ourselves[e]. Or rather let him retire into his closet, and think no company in the world pure enough for him but his books, and no books but his own; his preciseness, I assure him, shall never trouble me at all. And I suppose I may pass my word for our whole church, that they will not complain for want of his company, nor think it any disgrace to our worship that such do not like it, or perhaps abhor it; nor any shame to themselves that they will have no communion with us. There were always people of a morose and sour humour, whom nothing can please; no, not what they do themselves, when once it pleases others too. They must be of a contrary opinion to the whole race of mankind, and hate some things only because others love them. And therefore if they not only withdraw themselves from us, but also slight us and set us at naught; the concern is not so great (if we respect ourselves merely) as to require my care. Let them call us the world, and, if they please, the dogs that are without the holy city; I value it no more than the barkings of an angry cur; though in his vain conceit of himself and party, he imagines we lay their disrespect to us mightily at heart. For

[e] Yet you must not hope for this, for they must stay to "pour forth the vials," which next to the separating from us, is the thing that provokes the antichristian party. For they are to "torment the men of the world, and make them gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for pain." As he tells you afterward, p. 179. [p. 403.]

this you know is another cause which he is pleased to assign, why the men of the world are angry with them. "The saints and people of God do not regard the men of the world, and the men of the world they think so. Now for high and lofty men to be slighted and not regarded, this makes them angry." For which he cites Dan. iii. and then repeats it. "They cannot bear this, that they should not be regarded; high and great men, that they should not be regarded: and therefore no wonder there is such a great deal of wrath and anger in their hearts against the people of God[f]." But let him repeat it as oft as he will; tell him from me, that it moves us not at all to want their regard, for we do not think ourselves honoured by their esteem and respect. It is rather a reproach than an honour to be commended and praised by such mouths as value a composed countenance, and a set of phrases, more than the most composed and regular life, and the best sense in the world.

Let them slight us therefore so much, if they list, as not to move their hat, or give us the time of the day; or turn their face another way when they chance to meet us; it is all one, we shall have never the worse opinion of ourselves or of our worship. We do not think them so able to judge of true worth, or to discern between true and false, good and bad, as to concern ourselves about their opinion; these being almost the same thing nowadays, and though all undertake to judge, yet few know the difference. We have something else also to support us than their favourable opinion of us, and that is, a sincere care with unbiassed affections to search after the will of God; and a readiness to receive and do it whensoever we know it. Let him bring us reasons instead of confident assertions, and see if we will not studiously consider them, and if they be good yield to them. He spoke admirably who said, that our reason ought to yield obedience to nothing but reason; and that authority is a yoke which none but God hath a right to impose upon our judgments. If God say it, that is reason enough; but we shall never be persuaded that they only hear or understand what he says. Let them talk as if they had not only slept in our Saviour's bosom, (as a gentleman I remember sometime said,) but even watched in his heart and soul, and as if there

[f] [P. 393.]

were none of his intentions hid from their knowledge: they will never gain the greater credit with us, unless we see more than words and confidence. No, though they should not only contemn and scorn us as altogether ignorant in the things of God, but pronounce anathemas and curses against us, as the limbs of the apocalyptic beast; heaven, we know, laughs them to scorn, and we shall smile at their ridiculous presumption. The wolves, we know, will never be reconciled with the shepherd's flock; and when we have done all that we can, there will be an envious and malicious generation, who like the rats and other imperfect creatures, (which it is possible were bred in the ark itself,) will still be gnawing the reputation even of the best church in the world. Every thing under heaven is abused; yea, and what heaven itself hath spoken is not safe from injury and violence; and therefore why should we look to have a general respect, or be cast down or angry either at the neglect of these men, or, if they please, their contempt and reproach?

N. C. You say you are not angry, but methinks you are in a great heat....

C. Not at the slighting us, I assure you.

N. C. What then?

C. I told you that I professed a just indignation at some things, and more particularly to see the Scripture so wretchedly abused and wrested even in this very case, to justify their separation and withdrawing from us.

N. C. You mean, I believe, that to the Corinthians cited by Mr. Bridge, *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, touch no unclean things.* 2 Cor. vi. 17.

C. Yes.

N. C. And doth it not require us to have no communion with the wicked, of which your congregations we think are full?

C. But do you think then we are all pagans and infidels, i. e. such people as do not so much as acknowledge Jesus Christ to be the Lord?

N. C. God forbid.

C. Then you apply those words impertinently to us, (as you do the rest of the Scriptures,) who are nothing like those from whom the apostle would have the Corinthians withdraw. It is

[g] Pag. 166. [P. 393.]

an exceeding great shame that you have been so long turning over the Bible, and talking of the word of God, and yet not understand so plain a thing as this. You seem to me to be like those the apostle speaks of in another epistle, who are *ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth.* Nay, you are like little children that tear and rend their book into little scraps, or like those imperfect creatures I spoke of before; you nibble at a bit of the Scripture, and instantly start away, and leave all the rest. Could you not have cast your eye back but to the 14th verse, there you might have seen who they are the apostle speaks of: *Be ye not unequally yoked together with infidels,* saith he; i. e., either do not marry an infidel, or do not join with them in any of their rites belonging to their idolatrous service. Be not at their idol-feasts, the thing he admonished them of in the former epistle, and touches upon here again, (as some think,) lest they should not be cautious enough in this particular. For the apostle having told them *an idol was nothing,* they might hold these festival entertainments to be indifferent things, and so when their kinsfolk or friends invited them, not deny that civility, to accompany them to their temples. Stay, says the apostle, consider what you do: *What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness,* &c. these things are as contrary as *light and darkness;* you cannot partake of the *table of the Lord* and the *table of devils* too, as he told them in his first letter. And then he renews his exhortation, *Come out from among them, and be ye separate,* (from those idolatrous infidels,) *touch no unclean thing;* meddle not with their idolatrous services, nor any of their wicked ways. You would be more assured that this is the sense, if you would but turn to the place from whence these words are cited, (as the margin directs you,) Isa. lii. 11, where the prophet bids not the more holy sort of Jews to separate from their profane brethren, but the whole body of the Jews to fly out of Babylon, as any body may see that reads the place. And therefore they cannot be urged without a notorious force to prove such a separation as you are in, of one part of a society professing belief in Christ, and baptized into his name and renouncing all idols whatsoever, from the other. And so Mr. Geree, I remember, a discreet presbyterian, confessed and explained the words to the same purpose that I do; and so did a noted person long be-

fore him[h], and far more largely, in his dispute against the Brownists. For I must tell you, those old separatists, condemned by all honest non-conformists in former times, sought to justify their schism from the Church of Christ, from this very place; and the very truth is, so did the ancient Donatists. Who, to make a fair show for their fearful schism, cried out, just as you do now, "Come out from among them, touch no unclean thing; depart, depart, separate yourselves; have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; be not partakers of other men's sins; what hath the chaff to do with the wheat?" which are the very words now ignorantly employed by your party against us, with as little knowledge of their sense and meaning, as of their being the rotten tools wherewith those schismatics sought to overthrow the whole church.

N. C. How come you by more knowledge than other folk in this matter? Can you tell what the Donatists said?

C. Yes, without reading St. Austin. For I can believe an old English divine who lived above half an age since, that acquainted me with this[i], and showed withal, that those proud

[h] Anno 1610. Mr. Rich. Bernard, Plain Evidence, p. 140, 141, &c.

[i] Mr. G. Gyffard 'Plain Declaration that our Brownists are full Donatists,' p. 19. an. 1590. ["George Giffard, or Gifford, was a student in Hart Hall several years before 1568, (10 Eliz.) at which time did also study there others of his sirname and allies, as Humphrey, Walter, and Rob. Gifford, but whether our author George was originally of this university, or that he took a degree in arts, law, physic, or divinity therein, it doth not at all (perhaps by the imperfectness of the registers) appear. Several persons in his time and before did, though they were beneficed, retire to this university purposely to improve themselves in learning and by conversation, and it is supposed that this Gifford did the like. Afterwards he became minister of Maldon in Essex, a very noted preacher, and one most admirably well versed in several sorts of learning, which were rare and much in esteem in his time, but withal a great enemy to popery."—Wood, Athen. Oxon. ii. 291.

From Grindal's Register it appears that he was admitted to the vicarage of All Souls and S. Peter's, Maldon, Aug. 30, 1582, and on his deprivation, Mark Wiersdale inducted into the same, Jan. 18, 1584, (N. S. 1585.)

Strype states the grounds of his suspension to have been "refusing to subscribe the Articles, which all the clergy were obliged to subscribe to, there being some things in the Book of Common Prayer which he was not persuaded of to be agreeable to the word of God. Information also was given against him to the bishop, that he taught disobedience to magistrates, used conventicles, and secret teachings, and divers other things worthy of sharp reprehension." Some influential

people had the same answer to this place from that father, which I have now given you. "These words," saith he, "they understanding carnally, have cut themselves into so many divisions, into little bits, in this Africa alone. For they do not understand that no man is joined with infidels, but he that commits the sins of pagans, or else doth favour those that do such things, &c. And who hath fellowship with darkness, but he that by the darkness of his consent, forsaking Christ, doth follow Belial? Who puts his part with infidels, but he which is partaker of that infidelity? For that way he ceaseth to be the temple of God, neither otherways doth he join himself to idols."

N. C. I am convinced of this. But may we not gather by proportion, that we ought to separate from the wicked sort of Christians, though it be not here intended?

C. Hear what Mr. John Geree answers to this[k]: "No. All

members of his flock obtained a letter from the lord treasurer Burghley on his behalf to Whitgift; but the archbishop, supported by Aylmer, bishop of London, refused to take off his suspension. But being cited not long after before the high commission, and the charges against him not being substantiated, license to preach was restored to him. He was however a second time suspended, when notwithstanding an influential petition from the justices and inhabitants of the town, setting forth his former acquittal from the same imputation, he could obtain no release from deprivation.—Life of Aylmer, p. 72. Life of Whitgift, i. 301.

This "Gyfford," adds Strype; "however he were a Puritan, wrote very well against Barrow, and the separatists, and the pleas and pretence urged by them for withdrawing from the public communion of the church."

His subsequent history seems to be unknown, but he lived to a good old age, dying about the year 1620. —Brook's Puritans, ii. 278.

Besides the present work, Gyffard's writings on the same controversy were, "A short treatise against the Donatists of England, whom we call Brownists."—4to, Lond. 1590, and, "A Reply to Mr. John Greenwood and Henry Barrow touching read prayer, wherein their gross ignorance is detected," dedicated to lord Burleigh.—4to, Lond. 1591.]

[k] Resolution of ten cases, 1644. ["Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ; or ten cases resolved, which discover, that though there bee need of reformation in, yet not of separation from the churches of Christ in England, by John Geree, master of arts, and preacher of God's word in Tewkesbury."—4to, Lond. 1644. See p. 23, quest. 5.

"John Geree, a Yorkshireman born, became either a batler or servitour of Magd. Hall in the beginning of the year 1615, in that of his age 15, took the degrees in arts, that of master being compleated in 1621, entred into holy orders, and became minister of a market town in Gloucestershire, called Tewkesbury. But

that can be inferred is, that we should avoid needless familiarity with the wicked, and all society in sin: to keep them from the sacrament if we can. But if it be not in our power, not to omit the sacrament because they partake of it." In which he followed the resolution of St. Austin, who immediately after the words before-mentioned, adds these, as my author tells me[1]; "And they which are the temples of the living God, and in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation appear as lights in the world, having the word of life; nothing doth infect them, which they tolerate for unity's sake, nor are they pent up in any strait, because God doth dwell in them and walk in them. And they depart in the meantime out of the evil, and are separate, at least in heart; lest haply while they would separate by the sedition of schism, they should rather be spiritually separated from the good, than corporally from the bad." This old divine also admonishes us very well out of the same father, that when the multitude of the assemblies of the church are free from that crime to which excommunication is denounced, it is very healthful; and because so many avoid

being schismatically inclined, he refused to conform to certain ceremonies in the church of England, whereupon being silenced by Goodman his diocesan, he lived by the helps of the brethren. At length upon the change of the times in 1641, he was restored by the committee of religion to his said cure, where continuing till about 1645, he became preacher of the word at S. Alban's in Hertfordshire; and in two years after, or less, at S. Faith's under Paul's in London. At all which places he was much resorted to by those of the presbyterian persuasion.... All that I have more to say of him is, that he died in his house in Ivey-lane, near to Paternoster-row in London, in the latter end of the year (in Feb. as it seems) 1648 (1649 N.S.), but where buried, unless in S. Faith's church aforementioned, I cannot tell. The minister who preached his funeral sermon told the auditory that he died poor; whereupon there was a collection of money made among the brethren for his children. This is the same Mr. Geree, of whom a noted author (Baxter, Plea for N. C.'s ministry, p. 145.) reports to have died with grief and trouble for the murder of king Charles I."—Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 244.]

[1] B. 2. against Parmen. cap. 18. ["Qui autem sunt templum Dei vivi, et in medio nationis tortuosæ ac perversæ apparent sicut luminaria in mundo, verbum vitæ habentes (Philipp. ii. 15.), nihil eos quod pro unitate tolerant inficit. Nec augustantur, quia in illis habitat et deambulat Deus: et exeunt de medio malorum, atque separantur interim corde; ne forte cum id facere per seditionem schismatis volunt, prius a bonis spiritualiter, quam a malis corporaliter separentur."—tom. ix. col. 51 G.]

him, he will be stricken with fear, and healed through shame. But when the same sickness hath taken hold of very many, there remains nothing else to the good but sorrow and bewailing, that so they may escape that destruction which is like to come on the multitude of the wicked. And in very deed, saith he, if the contagion of sinning hath invaded the multitude, the severe mercy of divine discipline is necessary: but the counsel or enterprises of separation are both vain and pernicious, yea sacrilegious; because then they become both impious and proud, and give more trouble to the good which are weak, than they correct the sturdy ones who are evil. And concluding this point, he gives this advice; "Let a man therefore with mercy correct what he can; and that which he cannot, let him bear with patience: and with love let him mourn and lament, until He from above do either redress and amend, or else defer until the harvest to root out the tares, and to winnow out the chaff." And here he alleges the example of St. Cyprian, that holy martyr, who had been bishop of Carthage, and describes the multitude as full of gross sins, yea many of his fellow bishops as spotted with very foul crimes; but yet he communicated with them (though not in their sins, which he evermore reprehended, yet) in the sacraments and holy worship of God. Nay, he shows that our Saviour himself did not separate in body from the Pharisees and Sadducees, and multitude of common people, but met with them at the temple; and it is also plain, that the African church in St. Austin's days, besides their evil manners, had some other blemishes which cannot be charged on ours; for by his own complaint it appears there were such a multitude of rites and ceremonies then in use, that they were a very great burden, and the church was oppressed and groaned under them. And therefore I think your preciseness in separating from us is more like the disdainful and proud religion of the Scribes and Pharisees, than the humble and charitable purity of our blessed Saviour.

N. C. If you take these old fathers for your guides, they will lead you I know not whither. They held many strange opinions.

C. I suppose you would separate from them too, if they were alive. But what think you of Mr. Calvin? He is a more

modern father, and you may think perhaps more enlightened; will you stand to his judgment?

N. C. Why? what says he?

C. He tells you, that "wheresoever the gospel is purely preached, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there is the church of God. And if the very multitude hath and doth honour these, it deserves without doubt to be esteemed and judged a church; because it is certain that these things are not without fruit[n]." And if you look a little further to the next section, he repeats it again with much earnestness. "There appears (in such a multitude as he mentioned before) neither a deceitful nor doubtful face of a church: of which no man may either despise the authority, or refuse the admonitions, or resist the counsels, or mock at the corrections; much less depart from it, break in sunder the unity of it, and go unpunished. For the Lord so highly esteems the communion of the church, that he counts him for a traiterous runaway and forsaker of religion, whosoever shall stubbornly estrange himself from any Christian fellowship; so that it be such an one as hath a true ministry of the word and sacraments. He so commends the church's authority, that when it is violated, he judges his own diminished[o]." Doyou hear this?

N. C. Yes. But——

C. To prevent all your exceptions, look further into the 12th section, and there he will tell you that the fellowship of such a church is never to be cast off, "though it swarm full of many

[n] ["Ubicunque enim Dei verbum sincere prædicari atque audiri, ubi sacramenta ex Christi instituto administrari videmus, illic aliquam esse Dei ecclesiam nullo modo ambigendum est...At de ipsa multitudine aliter sentiendum est, quæ si ministerium habet verbi et honorat, si sacramentorum administrationem, ecclesia proculdubio haberi et censeri meretur, quia sine fructu illa non esse certum est."]—Instit. lib. iv. cap. 1. sect. 9. [p. 273.]

[o] ["Utcunque sit, ubi reverenter auditur evangelii prædicatio, neque sacramenta negliguntur, illic pro eo tempore neque fallax neque ambigua ecclesiæ apparet facies; cujus vel auctoritatem spernere, vel monita respuere, vel consiliis refragari, vel castigationes ludere, nemini impune licet; multo minus ab ea deficere, ac ejus abrumpere unitatem. Tanti enim ecclesiæ suæ communionem facit Dominus, ut pro transfuga et desertore religionis habeat, quicunque se a qualibet Christiana societate, quæ modo verum verbi ac sacramentorum ministerium colat, contumaciter alienavit. Sic ejus auctoritatem commendat, ut dum illa violatur, suam ipsius imminutam censeat."—Sect. 10.]

faults; yea, and there may be some faultiness crept into it in the administration either of doctrine or of the sacraments, yet it ought not to estrange us from the communion of it: for all the articles be not of one sort; and therefore we ought not rashly for every light dissension to forsake the church[p]," &c. But then in the next he tells you, that "in bearing with the imperfections of life our gentle tenderness ought to go much further[q];" and in the next but one, that "it is one thing to shun the private company of a wicked man, and another for hatred of such to forsake the communion of the whole church: which is to be more rigorous than St. Paul[r]." And "although this temptation to forsake the church may by an indiscreet zeal of righteousness enter into the thought of a good man, yet we shall find that too much preciseness grows rather out of pride, disdainfulness, and false opinion of holiness, than of true holiness and true zeal thereof. They that are bolder than others, and as it were the standard-bearers, to make any departing from the church, for the most part do it upon no other cause but their despising of all men, to boast themselves to be better than others[s]." But I think I had best let the rest alone, lest you say I rail upon godliness (of which this separation is now grown a great note), though in Mr. Calvin's words.

[p] ["Quod dicimus purum verbi ministerium, et purum in celebrandis sacramentis ritum, idoneum esse pignus et arrhabonem, ut tuto possimus societatem in qua utrumque extiterit, pro ecclesia amplexari, usque eo valet ut nusquam abjicienda sit, quamdiu in illis perstiterit, etiamsi multis alioqui vitiis scateat. Quin etiam poterit vel in doctrina, vel in sacramentorum administratione vitii quidpiam obrepere, quod alienare nos ab ejus communione non debeat. Non enim unius sunt formæ omnia veræ doctrinæ capita."—Sect. 12.]

[q] ["In vitæ autem imperfectione toleranda multo longius procedere indulgentia nostra debet: hic enim valde lubricus est lapsus; neque vulgaribus machinamentis hic Satan nobis insidiatur."—Sect. 13.]

[r] ["Sed aliud est malorum fugere contubernium; aliud, ipsorum odio, ecclesiæ communionem renunciare. Quod autem sacrilegium esse putant participare cum illis panem Domini, in eo rigidiores multo sunt quam Paulus."—Sect. 15.]

[s] ["Quanquam autem ex inconsiderato justitiæ zelo hæc tentatio bonis etiam interdum oboritur, hoc tamen reperiemus, nimiam morositatem ex superbia magis et fastu, falsaque sanctitatis opinione, quam ex vera sanctitate veroque ejus studio nasci. Itaque qui ad faciendam ab ecclesia defectionem sunt aliis audaciores et quasi antesignani, ii ut plurimum nihil aliud causæ habent, nisi ut omnium contemptu ostentent se aliis esse meliores."—Sect. 16.]

N. C. We are not to mind what men say, nor to have their persons in admiration.

C. No? Not what your own ministers say? Sure their words are another gospel with you, or else how come you so to misunderstand the old?

N. C. They are good men, and so we value what they say.

C. I will show you then that they have said the very same in behalf of our form of divine service that I did the last time we talked together; and that they condemn this withdrawing from us, which Master Bridge makes the mark of a saint.

N. C. Pray let it alone, it will be too long.

C. Let me tell you thus much; that they told their brethren of New England heretofore, that if we deny communion with such a church as ours, "there hath been no church these fourteen hundred years with which a Christian might lawfully joint." Nay, that if such scruples as are now in your heads may take place, "it will be unlawful to hold communion with any society under heaven:" and that as for making an idol of the Common Prayer, (which, by the way, was a phrase they themselves made use of afterward,) it might be as well said that "they made an idol of their conceived prayers." And therefore what evil spirit is it that now possesses so many of your presbyterian ministers, and hath driven them, as if they were out of their wits, from our church and their own principles, and from all the churches of Christ that now are or ever were?

N. C. Pray do not say so.

C. They have granted me that for fourteen hundred years there never was any church with which we might hold communion, if not with ours: and I will prove that there hath been none for these sixteen hundred and sixty-eight years.

N. C. You are strangely bold.

t Letter of many Ministers in Old England requesting the judgment of their Brethren in New England concerning nine positions, 1637, with their answer, 1639; and the reply 1640. Published afterward by Mr. Simeon Ash, and Mr. W. Rathband, 1643. [See pp. 12, 15 of the Reply of the Ministers of Old England to the Answer of those of New England on the second position: "that it is not lawfull to joyne in prayer, or receive the sacraments, where a stinted liturgie is used; or as we conceive your meaning to be in this as in the former question, viz. where and when that stinted liturgie is used." Compare p. 457, above.]

C. No bolder than Mr. Calvin, who will give you good satisfaction, if you read the chapter to which I referred you, that the church of the Jews in our Saviour's time, and the apostolical churches afterward, tolerated greater vices in manners, and fouler errors in doctrine, than were in any church from which in his days a separation was made. And I will show you distinctly, either now or when you will require it, that those churches planted and watered by the apostles had those corruptions in doctrine, worship, manners, discipline, and government, which cannot be pretended to be in ours: and yet there was no separation of some members from the rest; nay, the apostles, notwithstanding all these, speak very well in general of all, because of the graces of some. They call them all believers and saints; and none knew then any other men of the world, and unbelievers, but pagans; such as did not acknowledge Jesus to be the Lord.

N. C. I am loath to give you so great trouble: but I pray answer me one Scripture which seems to be against this; when it saith, *the apostle separated the disciples,* Acts xix. 9.

C. Admirably argued! The apostles separated the disciples from those that were not disciples; and therefore we may separate disciples from disciples.

N. C. How say you?

C. The apostles, I say, were sent to preach the gospel, and make disciples to Christ, baptizing them into his name who believed on him. Those who would make profession of Christ they gathered into a new church from among the Jews and pagans who disowned him: and accordingly here in this city having won some to believe, and made them Christ's disciples, they separated them from the rest of the Jewish synagogue, who blasphemed Christ, and would acknowledge no other religion but that of Moses, to be a distinct society by themselves, and no longer members of the unbelieving synagogue. From whence you would infer that one Christian is to be separated from another Christian, and believers gathered from believers, if one part appear to us pious and the other vicious; which is just as if the apostles, out of those few disciples separated from the Jews, had made another lesser church separated from the rest of the disciples.

N. C. I see my error plainly, and shall remember hereafter,

if I can, not merely to nibble at the Scripture, as you called it, but take it altogether. But Mr. Bridge affrights us horribly with one place, which prophesies, he says, of the greatest "separation in the latter days that ever was." It is in the Revelation, where the Spirit cries, *Come out of her, my people, that you be not partaker of her sins.* "There shall be the greatest separation, and that provokes the antichristian party[u];" as his words are, p. 179 of the book before mentioned.

C. I remember them very well, Rev. xviii. 4: but do you still take Mr. Bridge for a prophet? Have I not shown you what a rare seer he is in the Revelations?

N. C. I have heard others beside him mention this place. Mr. Case, I remember, gave us this reason to hope that God would be gracious to England, and that Babylon should shortly fall; "because he had begun with such a distinct and audible voice from heaven to call his people out of Babylon, saying, *Come out of her, my people,* &c., Rev. xviii. 4; her idolatrous bowings, cringings, altars, crosses, and cursed ceremonies, false worship, false doctrine[x]."

C. You need say no more: I have it perfectly in mind as well as you; and you were wont, I know, in those days to believe that they knew the designs of Heaven as well as if they had been counsellors of state in that kingdom; and conceived the news they told you of what was coming as sure and certain as if they had lain in the bosom of St. John, as he did in our Saviour's: but I hope by this time you are convinced they were only drowsy dreamers, that knew nothing of his mind; and see that they are but like a poor mouse, which having but one hole is easily caught. *Babylon, Babylon,* was all they had to say then, and thither they run now. These are the magical sounds whereby they would astonish you; the mystical words whereby they practise all their sorceries upon you. Stop but your ears against these, and you are free from their enchantments; for they can never prove that the church of

[u] [P. 402.]

[x] England's Encouragement to wait on God, p. 68. ["God's waiting to be gracious unto his people: together with England's Encouragements and cautions to wait on God, delivered in certaine sermons at Milk Street in London, by Tho. Case, minister of God's word, and lecturer there."—4to, Lond. 1642.]

England is this Babylon from whence his people are called, or that she hath taken so much as one sip, or kissed the cup of her fornications.

N. C. I never asked them indeed to prove this.

C. No, you took it very lovingly upon their word, and ran after those whom you fancied, and were enamoured of with an implicit faith; as if you had tasted too deep of the cup yourselves. If you did but hear them say, *Mystery, mystery*, (the very word you know in the forehead of the whore,) presently you bowed to them, and thought you were under the teachings of an infallible spirit. And you remember, I suppose, very well, that those two, and all the rest of the ministers that were wont to preach before the parliament, and in the greatest congregations, generally chose their texts out of the Old Testament, seldom out of the New, unless it were the Revelation.

N. C. What of that?

C. By which means they furnished themselves in an abundant measure with such comparisons as did them admirable service. They could easily contrive it so, that they might seem such a select number as the Jews, the peculiar people of God, and we like the Egyptians and Babylonians, or what other accursed nation they pleased; and so applying all those places which spoke of them to us and our times, they excited in you the same hatred against us that was in the Jews against those nations; and made you think it as necessary to separate from us as for the Jews to come out of Babylon: nay, by a wonderful art, or prodigious enchantment rather, (which argues your great dulness,) they first raised your fancies, put words into your mouths, and taught you to expect all that they had a mind should shortly come to pass; and then they made the expectation they had wrought in you an argument that it should come to pass. Thus, I remember, one of your divines encouraged the parliament to expect the overthrow of Babylon, because, said he, "the general talk throughout the household among the domestics is, that Christ their king is coming to take possession of his throne: this they not only whisper, but speak publicly. Now you know before kings go to a place, their purpose is first known among the domestic servants, and talked of within doors first, and then abroad, and harbingers prepare the way. This

hath been the news throughout the household, and harbingers have been sent abroad: it is a sign that he is not far off, it will not be long before he come[y]."

N. C. Cannot you repeat a sentence without laughing?

C. If you had not been very gross you would have either laughed or been angry at those that did not see or would not take notice of the cheat. How came you, I beseech you, to whisper this, and afterward talk it abroad, that Christ was coming to sit upon his throne? Had you any Revelation of it? Did you that are his domestics hear Christ the king say so? Or were you not told so by these pretended favourites of his, and believed them without asking whence they had the news?

N. C. Undoubtedly we never thought of it till we heard it preached and proclaimed by them.

C. And then, when your heads were filled with this conceit, and they had set your tongues agoing, and made this the general talk, they asked you, (if you were apt to despond,) Why do you doubt of it? Be of good cheer; without question he is not far off; for otherwise you would never have talked so much of his coming: which was no more in plain English than this; You would never have believed us, if it were not so. Were not these rare devices to support the people's confidence? And were not the people very blind that could not discern this foul imposture? Never talk now of the sottishness of the multitude in the Romish church; for they are cozened by neater legerdemains than this: which is just as if I should entertain a child a long time with hopes of plums and fine toys coming from some fair; and when he began to doubt of it, should tell him, Thou hast talked of them so long, my child, that without question they will be here by and by; how is it possible that thou shouldest be in such expectation of them, if they were not at hand?

N. C. No more words; you have said enough to make a child understand the delusion.

C. And yet you suffered yourselves to be wheedled and cheated thus over and over again: as if you would cross the apostle's rule, and be *men in malice, but children in understanding.* You heard your ministers pray, for instance, that Babylon might fall, and the walls of Jerusalem be built;

[y] Mr. H. Wilkinson, Sermon upon Zach. i. 18, 19. p. 21. [Cited above, p. 529.]

and then you heard them stirring you up with the greatest vehemence to give God no rest till Jerusalem was made a *praise in the earth.* And when they had set you all on fire with these desires, then you were very well contented to be made believe it was a certain sign God would do the business, because he had put it in your hearts to be so earnest for it. How is it possible, said they, that there should be such a spirit of grace and supplication poured suddenly on the nation if Christ were not coming down after it? "Since God hath knit the hearts of his people in such a holy conspiracy, as it were, to besiege heaven with their prayers, all is not to be given for lost[z]." "God hath taken off the bridle of restraint from the lips of his people[a]." "The prayers of God's people are gone up to heaven in great assemblies, and have surrounded the throne of grace: God was never so tempted to bow the heavens and come down to the rescue of his people[b]." "God will bow down his ears to them; if they cannot come to God, he will cause his ear to come down to them; he will make hard shift, as it were, to hear, rather than their prayers be lost[c]."

N. C. You make me blush to think how we have been gulled.

C. So you will be still; and it is no wonder they make so bold with you, since they were so bold with God and with his holy word, which they drew to be instrumental in the cheat. They sanctified every design with some text of Scripture or other, and with many prayers; till they had "defaced the certainty of holy writ, and made no other thing of it than a nose of wax, which may be turned any way as will serve our purposes." You need not be angry, they are the words of one esteemed heretofore[d], though I know not what thoughts you

[z] Mr. Case, England's Encouragement to wait on God, pp. 77–80.

[a] Page 78.

[b] Page 79. [c] Page 80.

[d] Mr. Knewstubs against the Heresie of N. N. p. 61. [fol. 81. An error, common to all the editions alike, and most probably due to the printer, for H. N. the initials of Henry Nicholas, the fanatical teacher at Amsterdam, and afterwards at Embden, with whom originated the Family of Love or Familists, a kind of offshoot of the German anabaptists, about the middle of the 16th century. John Knewstubs, fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and afterwards vicar of Cockfield, Suffolk, and one of the representatives of the puritan party at the Hampton-court conference, published in 1579 "A Confutation of monstrous and horrible heresies taught by H. N., and embraced of a number who call

would have of him, or he of you, if he lived now. If I may pass my conjecture, I think he would take you to be the very spawn of those Brownists, which were so justly detested in those days: for he would hear the same words and phrases out of your mouths now, which he heard in those days from theirs, who cried out upon an idol church, an idol ministry, an idol government: and, as if they were sure to carry the cause by these outcries, they never ceased to pour out these accusations; wherewith the people were terribly affrighted. For they, poor souls, never considered that if all were granted that such words import, it would not prove a separation should be made from our assemblies. For in what sense can a minister be said to be an idol, but in such an one as the people of England were called so by one of you?

N. C. What sense should that be?

C. I will repeat his words, if you please; which you may find in a book put forth on purpose to prevent a peace between the king and parliament, upon any terms than such as should make the king yield to all their desires. "We have long pretended zeal", (saith that author[e],) "against idolatry, when in the mean

themselves the Familie of love," 4to, Lond. 1579; a learned and scholarlike production, in which he adduces many passages from various tracts, particularly one which contains the fullest development of the new doctrine: "An Introduction to the holy understanding of the Glass of Righteousness; set forth by H. N." without date or printer's name.

Another of H. N.'s principal writings appeared in a Latin translation with the title, "Evangelium; seu lætum Dei ac Christi nuncium, &c.," and in English, translated "out of Base-Almayn," entitled "Evangelium regni; a joyful message of the kingdom, published by the holy Spirit of the love of Jesus Christ," &c. —Lond. 1652.

In the previous year John Rogers had published "The displaying of an horrible sect of gross and wicked heretics, naming themselves the Family of Love, with the lives of the authors," &c., in which he reckons their number in England to be as many as 1000, and refers to upwards of a dozen of their publications. A reply to this was put forth by Christopher Vitel, a joiner of Delft in Holland, settled at Colchester, and one of their principal propagandists there; which was answered by Rogers in 1579. In addition to these sources, some account of the origin and principles of the sect, and of their progress in England, will be found in Strype's Annals, vol. ii. 1. 556; 2. 282: Grindal, 383: Whitgift, i. 421; iii. 158: and Keble's note on Hooker, pref. 3. § 9. vol. i. p. 148.

Another profound and erudite refutation of the Familistic extravagances was produced by Henry More, An Explanation of the Grand Mystery of Godliness, &c. fol. Lond. 1660.]

[e] Plain English, p. 27, 1643.

["Plaine English, or a discourse concerning the Accommoda-

time we are all become one idol: we have eyes, and see not an army of papists, not only with permission allowed to use their own religion, but with commission appointed (in event) to destroy ours: we have ears and hear not the continual blasphemies against our God, the reproaches and slanders against our parliament. It cannot indeed be said we have mouths and speak not; for they that do least commonly speak most: but I am sure I may say, we have feet and march not; hands have we and handle not the sword and shield."

N. C. You love still to be rubbing these old sores, as I told you once.

C. Not I: but I love to rub up your memory, that you may reflect how your beloved phrases are applied to all purposes; and see that an idol-minister can signify nothing but one that doth no more of the work of a minister, than the people, it seems, did of your work of fighting against the king; till they were alarmed by such clamours as these, and afraid to be thought idolaters, or an idol-people. In short, he is such a person as the shepherds of Israel were, when they neglected their office, and took no care of the flock committed to their trust: from whom notwithstanding the people of Israel were not to withdraw, nor to renounce all communion with them, and obedience to them. But besides this, I would have you know, that if there be any ministers among us that are but like idols and images of men, there are those (and thanks be to God, good store) who hear and see and speak and do the will of God in the places where they are set.

N. C. I am convinced of all this.

C. But I pray once more observe whether all such writers and preachers as Mr. Bridge and the rest of the separation in

tion, the Armie, the Association. *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur.* Printed (unlesse men be the more carefull, and God the more mercifull) the last of liberty, 1643." In the "Mystery of Iniquity," an anonymous pamphlet published in 1675, it is attributed to Edward Bowles. It was published early in the year 1643 (N. S.) the date of its registration in the MS. catalogue of books received into the library of the British Museum being Jan. 12, 1642. It called forth immediately "An Answer to a seditious pamphlet intituled 'Plain English;' wherein the reasons against an accommodation are answered, the miseries of the kingdom in generall laid open, and shewn to be kept up for the maintenance of a few persons of decayed fortunes, and an Application to the much wronged Citty: printed in the yeare 1642." This bears the motto, Leges signata que jura, et causas non fata sequor. (From Lucan, iii. 302.)]

which you are engaged, do not take more pains to prove the danger of idolatry and the heinousness of the sin, than to tell you what idolatry is, and to prove that it is idolatry to join with us. Their way always was to prove little, and to accuse stoutly; to declaim loudly, and not to reason; to terrify the people by a dreadful sound of words, and raise great passions in them: not to inform their judgments what they are to do and what to avoid. And for that purpose nothing hath ever done them better service than Babylon, and Egypt, and the golden calves, and idol-ministers, idol-service, and suchlike words of no certain and determinate meaning. And to say the truth, in this (as Mr. Can himself could not but observe a great while ago) consists a great difference between Christ's institutions and men's inventions: "Whatsoever God will have us do or not do, he lays down the same openly, precisely, manifestly;...but when Satan speaks by his instruments, he speaks so ambiguously and cloakedly that one knows not how to take it, nor which way to apply it[f]." Which if you will but apply (as Mr. Ball told him) to your own manner of disputing and alledging testimonies, "it will discover yourselves to be the deceivers, who affect ambiguous and equivocal speeches, and seek by mists and fogs of strange and unusual arguments, and sentences wrest to a contrary sense, to blind the eyes and puzzle the understandings of the simple. For you hide yourselves under the terms of false church, false ministry, false prophets, false worship, flying from idolatry, taking heed of idols, &c. which you have taken up in a peculiar sense; and running along in that strain you pervert the Scriptures, wrong authors, confound things to be distinguished, dispute sophistically; and while you boast of clear proofs, divine precepts, example and practices of fore-

[f] So I find his words cited in Mr. J. Ball's Book against him, p. 88. ["An Answer to two treatises of Mr. John Can (or Canne), the leader of the English Brownists in Amsterdam: the former called, A Necessitie of separation from the Church of England, proved by the Non-conformists principles; the other, a Stay against Straying: wherein, in opposition to M. John Robinson, he undertakes to prove the unlawfulnesse of hearing the ministers of the Church of England: very seasonable for these times. By the late learned, laborious, and faithfull servant of Jesus Christ, John Ball: and now published by Simeon Ash," 4to, Lond. 1642. The passage quoted by Ball occurs in § 4. p. 33. of Can's "Stay against Straying." Some account of Canne, and of the present controversy, will be found in Hanbury's Historical Memorials of the Independents, vol. i. p. 515, sqq.]

fathers, &c. you only raise a dust to dazzle the eye: for let the matter be looked into, and you have neither divine precept nor example of godly forefathers to justify your separation. What you teach hath been condemned in schools, cried down in sermons, disallowed in all the churches of the saints from the very beginning to this day."

N. C. You are heated now to some purpose.

C. It is better you should blame my zeal than I blame my own chilness; and I had rather a great deal be condemned of some violence than of a lazy indifference in these matters. For who is there that values his religion, and reverences the sacred Scriptures, that can hear them thus abused and not have his spirit stirred in him?

N. C. There are those who think they smell something else that stirs the spirits of your ministers.

C. What should that be?

N. C. Envy and anger that any men should be liked better than themselves. It troubles them to see any body leave their churches and follow our ministers; because they would not be thought less able than they. And it is possible their congregations may be thin, when so many have withdrawn themselves from them.

C. There is an old saying, that "no man ever sought another in the oven who had not been there before himself." Had not your preachers been heretofore tickled with the sight of full congregations, and the fancy of having many followers, they could never think multitudes and thronged assemblies (which many do not want) so necessary to the contentment of any man of worth among us; and were not you intolerably proud and conceited of yourselves, this imagination could never have entered into your heads, that it dejects our ministers to want your company. What are you that they should tremble to hear you say in a threatening manner, We will never hear him more? Are you the only men of wisdom? the sole beauty of Christian assemblies? Is all their labour lost, if you be not there to commend it? Are the rest of the people no better than the walls and the seats? Speak man: is it a great courtesy to a minister that you will be pleased to hear him? Must he think himself beholden to you, that you vouchsafe him your presence? nay, take it for an honour, that you come and help to

make a numerous auditory; in which you shine, as the precious stones in a ring? O prodigious vanity! I have heard indeed that some of your ministers made low reverences to you and studied to humour you, as if they thought you deserved much of them for honouring their assemblies; but I know none of ours of that mind. If you will not come to hear them, you may stay away, and I wonder who will have the worse of it, you or they?

N. C. If they are not concerned in this, why do they keep such a stir about separation? Cannot they let the people do as they will, and say nothing? To what purpose is it to make so great a noise about such little things?

C. How say you, little things? Hear Mr. J. Ball, I beseech you, (a person whom you reverence, I suppose,) who tells you in another book of his, that how small soever the things in themselves may seem to be, the evil consequences that follow thereupon be both many and great. "It is no small matter to bury that under the condemnation of false worship" (as Mr. Bridge doth) "which the Lord, the author of all truth, the determiner of his true pleasing and acceptable worship, doth allow in his service. It is no small offence to forsako tho prayers of the congregation, to depart from the table of the Lord, when he calls to feast with himself; and to break off society and communion with the church of Christ, to fill tho hearts of weak Christians with doubts and distractions, as not knowing what to do, or what way to take; to spend time in reasonings and disputings of this kind, which might much more profitably be employed in the practice of repentance and holy obedience; to expose religion to contempt, and the truth of God to reproach among them that delight to speak evil. These are sad effects of this separation which I oppose[g]." Which tends not (as he speaks in his answer to Can[h]) "to the overthrow of antichrist, but to the rending of the church, the dis-

[g] Trial of the grounds of Separation. Epistle to the Reader. ["A Friendly Tryall of the grounds tending to Separation: in a plain and modest dispute touching the lawfulnesse of a stinted liturgie and set form of prayer, communion in mixed assemblies, and the primitive subjects and first receptacle of the power of the keyes; tending to satisfie the doubtfull, recall the wandering, and to strengthen the weak: by John Ball." — Cambridge and London, 4to, 1640.]

[h] [In the 'Answers to the epistles' prefixed to the work itself.]

grace of religion, the advancement of pride, schism, and contention, the offence of the weak, the grief of the godly who are better settled, the hardening of the wicked, and the recovery or rising of antichristianism." As for other evils (which he mentions not) such as the alienation or abatement of affection even where there is the nearest bond of society, and the souring of men's minds towards their governors, in whom they cannot so heartily rejoice as they ought, while they take them to be the imposers of idolatrous ceremonies, or sinful worship; I will not discourse of them neither: not because they are light matters; but because I have many things to add, and would not be too tedious.

N. C. I remember something in Mr. Ball to this purpose, and I confess it affected me then, and made me fearful to fall into the separation: especially because of another sad effect which was usually observed in those days to follow these divisions, among the people of your persuasion.

C. What is that?

N. C. I heard some say, that when men saw those who were so well conceited of their own knowledge, sincerity, and piety above others, mistake so grossly, and be so rigidly precise, as to make that sin, which God never made so; they fell into dislike even of all the good that was in them: and discerning how little reason they had for this strictness, presently imagined they had as little for the strictness of their lives and conversation in all other matters.

C. They told you the truth, and you should consider it now. There is nothing more difficult than to sever good and evil when they are mixed together. The good is frequently rejected by some for the evil's sake; and the evil received by others for the sake of the good. Men are wont either to like or dislike all that they see in those of whom they conceive a good or ill opinion. They that love the piety of some ministers fall in love also with their preciseness, and they that hate their preciseness may fall into hatred of their piety.

N. C. I am glad you will allow any thing that I say.

C. Did you think me of so perverse a humour, as to shut my eyes against the light of the sun, because an enemy opens the windows to let it in? I will ever embrace and justify a truth, come it from whom it will; and I pray know once for

all, that I do not approve of those who out of hatred to the superstition of your people, brand all that are of strict and holy lives with the name of presbyterian, fanatic, or some such like. But it would do well, if you would consider that which was the occasion of this discourse, how much hurt you do by being so rigid where there is no need. This tempts inconsiderate people on the one side to think it is but needless scrupulosity that makes you careful in other things which Christ indeed hath tied us unto: at least they will put off your reproofs for their debaucheries, by accusing you of more preciseness than you have reason for: and on the other side, you observing the unexcusable looseness of some that are enemies to your superstition, are tempted thereby to strengthen yourselves the more in it, and to stand the more stiffly in your separation from us. So that both sides are the worse for these differences, and increase their evil humours by these oppositions.

N. C. I cannot contradict you in this.

C. I must tell you one thing more. While men on both sides have by their contentions and hatreds gone further and further one from the other, they have fallen at last into most fearful extremities. On your part, some have proceeded to that degree of detestation, as to condemn us of idolatry and antichristianism, and have fallen not only into all the dregs of Brownism and Anabaptism, but into the dotages of the Quakers, and the men of the fifth kingdom. And on our part, some have drawn so far from you, as to fall back into popery, perhaps into atheism, at least indifference about religion, which are diseases too frequent also among yourselves. If therefore "the credit of religion, (as Mr. Ball again speaks,) the glory of God, the souls of our brethren, be dear to us; what can we do less than by a just defence of the truth seek the reclaiming of such as are gone astray, the establishing of them that are weak in judgment, but zealously affected to the ways of God; stop the stream of seducing, free the godly from unjust imputations, settle peace and unity in the truth among brethren; I may add, to keep the whole nation, if it be possible, from such dangerous precipices as they are drawing towards[i]?"

[i] [Preface to the Friendly Triall, &c.]

N. C. I hope you have a good meaning: but you should consider that I and the presbyterians are not withdrawn to such a distance from you as you say some are. We do not separate from the congregations as antichristian, nor think that you are not the churches of Jesus Christ, which was the error of the Brownists and such like schismatics.

C. You should have added, of Mr. Bridge and the rest of his partakers, as I have plainly shown you: and I wish I could not say, of some presbyterians too, who once abhorred such rents as they have now made. For what did they mean to call us Babylon so oft, if they would not have the people think (whatsoever they thought themselves) that we were antichristian? Expound to me all the passages already mentioned, particularly that of Mr. Case just now cited: tell me what you think of the "distinct and audible voice from heaven which they heard to call you to come out of Babylon[k]." Why did he make the war between the king and you, to be "the battle between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his[l]?" and the peace which some wished, and was sometime hoped, a "compounding of the business between Christ and antichrist[m]?" Tell me, if you say true, why they took the liberty to tell you, that "when episcopacy and liturgy were restored in Scotland, then will-worship and damnable idolatry was set up[n]?" And to pass by the speeches of your railing Vicars, why did Mr. Fr. Woodcock (in his lectures at St. Lawrence before named) call the bishops and their partakers, I cannot tell how oft, the popish faction, the antichristian faction, the antichristian party who slew the witnesses[o], i. e. suspended and silenced some

[k] Engl. Encouragements. [p. 68.]

[l] [Ibid. p. 126.]

[m] [Ibid. p. 106.]

[n] "Preface to the Book of Discipline. ["And now forsoothe the new work rising in place of the old to be more firme, and of the old foundation, when the mysterie of iniquity, after long working in secret was seen manifested; there was a new face brought upon the kirk. The pure fountaines of holy Scripture troubled with the puddle of trifling traditions, ceremonies brought in, and will-worship and damnable idolatry set up, apostolicall discipline abolished, and popish policie exalted."—From the preface to a quarto volume, published apparently with authority, bearing the title, "The First and Second booke of Discipline; together with some acts of the Generall Assemblies, clearing and confirming the same, and an act of parliament; printed anno 1621."

This preface is not attached to the editions of the books of Discipline in ordinary use.]

[o] ["In this kingdom therefore (yet in this not excluding other

ministers for not conforming to the laws? Lastly, why were these lectures ordered to be printed, and every pulpit suffered

places) for many years last past there have been godly ministers, and others, who by their preaching, writing, and other wayes testifying against antichrist and his wickednesses, have hereby discovered themselves to be of these witnesses: who in regard they *mourned* to see antichristianisme so farre prevail, as also because *kept under* without countenance, esteem, maintenance, by a popish prelaticall party (themselves the mean while living in all height of honour and excesse) might with good congruity be said to *prophesie in sackcloth.* And sure he that had seen the condition of the godly ministers in this kingdom not many years ago, especially of such who were so bold as to meddle with either prelacie, or the ceremonies, without the help of an interpreter would have readily pronounced, these are no other than the *witnesses in sackcloth.*

"But forward: when the date of these witnesses prophesying draws toward an end (which excluding their three years and a half lying dead, will fall about five or six years agone): then the antichristian power *slays* the witnesses, silences, suspends, throws them from their places: thus slaying them. And hath not all this been fulfilled in our eyes? Were not all the bold opposers of prelacy, and the ceremonies, the great remains of popery in this kingdom left undemolished, were they not all silenced, had their mouths stopped, and so slain in this kingdom? .. and then did not the prelaticall faction forbid any to shelter, countenance, or succour these silenced witnesses? You know what search hath been made for these same, what care that none should shelter them. Thus not suffering *their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

"When they have brought things to this passe, and slain all the witnesses, then they *rejoice and make merry.* And did not that faction do so here? Did they not triumph they had made such a hand of the puritan preachers through the kingdom? Have I not heard some of them have boasted, and hugg'd themselves in it, 'They had not left a puritan preacher in their diocese?' This was the sad condition of the godly ministers, and some others well-affected, for some three or four years before this parliament. How think you now: doth this appear like a slaying of the witnesses, yes, or no? But to proceed. After three years and an half the Spirit of life from God enters into the witnesses, and they stand upon their feet. God by his speciall hand restores the witnesses to their liberty again, which the antichristian faction beholding, thereupon become greatly afraid. And hath not all this been made good among us also? Doth any question, when after the three years and an half silencing and imprisonment of those who suffered more publikely (for just so long to a day these suffered), they together with many other silenced and dead witnesses were again restored to liberty, the beginning of this parliament? At the beholding whereof, and to see such a sudden and unexpected turn of things, I appeal to any man, did not the popish prelaticall faction become no little affrighted? How think you now; was not this like a *resurrection* of the witnesses?"—pp. 83, 5. of "The two Witnesses, sermons on Rev. xi. 3—15, by Francis Woodcock,"—4to, Lond. 1643. See above, p. 518.]

to sound with such like language? If all these things were said in heat, the better to stir up the people's passions; say so, and we have done. You shall never hear a syllable of the late times from me; if you do but ingenuously confess your rashness, and humble yourselves for these and such like faults. Or if any of you were then of the mind that episcopacy was antichristian, (as it is affirmed in the View of the Covenant, p. 34[p],) a limb or claw of the beast, as the Brownists' phrase was, but now are of another opinion; let us know it, that we may rejoice in the change. Wise men sometimes change opinions and counsels, though fools do not. And they will change for the better, as Mr. Bridge hath done for the worse. For there was a time when he and his brethren made this declaration before God and all the world concerning the English churches, "in which," say they, "through the grace of God we were converted;...that all that conscience of the defilements we conceived to cleave to the true worship of God in them, or of the unwarrantable power in church-governors exercised therein, did never work in any of us any other thought, much less opinion; but that multitudes of the assemblies and parochial congregations thereof were the true churches and body of Christ, and the ministry thereof a true ministry; much less did it ever enter into our hearts to judge them antichristian[q]." Why they should say 'multitude,' and not all, since they had the same form of divine service, and were under the same government, I know not; for it cannot be meant of such churches where the ministers were chosen by the people, which were but few. Nor am I concerned to know the sense of those words, but I would gladly know, if they please, why they cannot now see multitudes of such churches; and by what new light or revelation Mr. Bridge hath discovered our worship and churches to be

[p] ["As for the government by archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, chancellors, &c. all reformed churches have rejected, as being the way, not of Christ but of antichrist: it having all the same officers, the pope, as antichrist, hath in the church of Rome, long since accursed of God, Revel. 18. and elsewhere."—A view of the Solemn League and Covenant, &c. by T. Mocket, master of arts of Q. C. C. p. 34. 4to, Lond. 1644.]

[q] Apologet. Narration, 1643. p. 6. [The petition of the independent divines in the Westminster Assembly, presented to parliament, under the circumstances detailed in the notes on the First Part of the Friendly Debate, p. 325 above.]

antichristian, from which the saints must come forth and separate themselves. Or rather (for now you would have me speak to you alone) why so many presbyterians withdraw themselves from our prayers and sacraments, and hold separate assemblies in opposition to ours. You do not make your cause the better but the worse by this acknowledgment, that you do not depart from us as no true churches of Jesus Christ: and stand condemned by your own declared principles, and all the writings of your forefathers. "To forsake the true churches of Christ," saith Mr. J. Goodwin himself[r], "and the ministry thereof, where men have been converted and built up, and have converted and built up so many, with the setting up of new churches, against the leave and will of the civil magistrate, without the consent of those churches departed from, and to the scandal and grief of so many godly ministers and Christians, nay, the scandal of all reformed churches; and this under the pretence of spiritual power and liberty purchased for them by Christ; had need have a clear and full proof, and not be built only upon such weak and slight grounds as flattering similitudes, witty allusions, remote consequences, strained and forced interpretations from hard and much controverted Scriptures." What clear proofs he afterward found, I cannot tell; but when he had rent himself even from the presbyterian churches, he could not but give the honourable testimony to ours[s], that "travellers from all parts confirmed, that there was more of the truth and power of religion in England under the late prelatical government, than in all the reformed churches besides." Therefore I must beseech you again to consider what solid grounds you have for forsaking such a church as this; which hath been the mother of so many pious souls, and extorted such praises even from those undutiful children, who, out of I know not what humour, lift up their heel against her. What spot do you spy in her now, which you could not discern heretofore? Or if there be any, what foul monster should it be

[r] Letter to Mr. Thomas Goodwin from Mr. John Goodwin before he turned Independent. [In the year 1643 John Goodwin published "A Quære concerning the church Covenant, &c. with a letter from J. G. to T. G." which might plausibly be thought at first sight to be that here alluded to. The passage cited does not however occur in it.]

[s] Sion Coll. visited. [p. 26.]

that thus affrights you, if indeed we be not the beast, nor any limb of him? You that profess so much tenderness of conscience, should rather, methinks, be horribly afraid, since you think we are a church still united to Christ; lest by separating from us, you cut yourselves off from him, and run in time to the greatest extremities, and utterly renounce and disown us. For as Mr. Ball hath well observed, they that have once broken off from us, "have run from one error into another, after the fond imagination of their heart, till they have dashed themselves against the rocks[t]." And indeed how can you expect it should be otherwise? "There is but one body, the church; but one Lord or head of the body, Christ: whosoever separates from the body, therefore, separates from Christ in that respect. And if we withdraw ourselves from him, where he graciously invites us to feast with him, may we not justly fear he will withdraw himself from us, and make us seek when we shall not find him? This voluntary separation from the Lord's table and the prayers of the congregation, is a willing excommunication of ourselves from the visible tokens of the Lord's presence and love. And if it be a grievous sin in church-governors to deprive any member of the church of all communion with the visible church, upon light and unnecessary occasions, is it not a greater sin in the members to deprive themselves of the same communion upon the like or less occasions[u]?" Without all doubt, this sin will be punished with blindness of mind if you persist in it: such offenders having run (as I am able to prove) from one thing to another with the greatest confidence, till they came to think themselves inspired and full of the Holy Ghost, even when they railed and reviled all other churches: and when those heats failed, to think that all religion was a mere hypochondriacal delusion. This Mr. Calvin assured you long ago would be the fate of separatists from such a church as ours; "because they dissolve (saith he) the sacred bond of unity, no man shall escape the just punishment of his divorce, that he shall intoxicate himself with the most pestilent errors and most foul dotages." Nay, your own ministers could admonish you heretofore, that "when religion either by choice or force is propagated in corners, many heretical doctrines are

[t] [Preface to the Friendly Triall, &c.] [u] [Ibid.]

hatched and preached, and afterward, it may be, printed too; which had not been conceived nor divulged, if the authors of them had continued in the society of public assemblies[x]." And therefore you, methinks, above all other men, should dread the sad effects of this new separation, as much as those men do the sea, who feel themselves yet wet, and come forth dropping from a wreck. Remember your own sad complaints and lamentations, the shrieks and the cries, which are yet fresh in our ears; remember what rocks you dashed against when you had once forsaken our company, and broken the bond of unity. Call to mind how many perished, and in what danger all were to be lost. Did you not pray the five brethren to consider in the beginning of the storm, that in their church-way, into which many were running, there would be no end of schisms; but every two or three members if they pleased might set up a church by themselves? Witness the rent in that church where Mr. Bridge and Mr. Sympson were teachers at Rotterdam[y]. Where Mr. Sympson, as Mr. Edwards informs us, having only a merchant and his wife joining with him at the first, separated from Mr. Bridge and set up a new church of their own; of which a woman (Mrs. White) was the foundress, as Mr. Bridge himself hath said. And when they were thus torn in sunder, both parts of the division fell together by the ears among themselves. There was a new rent in Mr. Sympson's company, and Mr. Ward, colleague to Mr. Bridge, was deposed from his ministry and office by Mr. Bridge's church, for some frivolous differences. And such was the bitterness, revilings, and reproaches expressed in the letters that passed between them, that the reader's ears would tingle should he hear them. In short, the Jews and the Samaritans were not greater enemies than these were one to another, as my author affirms.

N. C. Mr. Edwards you mean.

C. Yes: and I hope you think him a good one now, as you did heretofore. If not, I can justify what he says out of a learned Dutch writer, if you please.

N. C. I am not much concerned about this.

[x] Advertisement upon Phil. i. 1. before the annot. on the Bible, 1645. [See p. 306, for some account of the compilation ordinarily but erroneously known as the Assembly's Annotations, and of the authorship of the several portions.]

[y] Antapologia. [pp. 35, 132.]

C. But you are concerned to keep in mind these scandals in separate congregations. And it will do you no hurt, I am sure, to reflect a great deal further back; and consider what work the ancient separatists of our nation made in the same country. Johnson and Ainsworth fell out at Amsterdam, and their congregation was divided into two, one of which excommunicated the other. The two Johnsons also, though brethren in nature as well as religion, fell into such a fiery contention upon a small occasion, that George the younger became a libeller, and loaded his brother and others with many reproaches, and that in print, to remain for ever. The elder broke fellowship with him and with his own father, (who took part with George, and cursed the other with all the curses in God's book,) and his breach was confirmed by the heavy sentence of excommunication, and both father and brother delivered up to the devil. But then at Leyden, J. Smith condemned them all, and accused them of idolatry; telling them that their constitution was as very a harlot as either her mother England, or grandmother Rome; and that the separation was the youngest and fairest daughter of Rome the harlot. The reason was, because they looked into their Bibles when they preached, and into the Psalter when they sung; for the holy Scriptures, he said, were not to be retained as helps before the eyes in time of worship, and particularly that it was unlawful to have a book before them in singing of psalms. Besides, their government, he thought, was antichristian; because they joined to pastors other doctors and rectors, which was an human invention. And so he fell to the anabaptists; where he made also a new sect, by baptizing himself. If you please to have some of his words, perhaps they may be useful to you: "When popish prelacy," saith he[x], "was suppressed, and the triformed presbytery (viz. pastors, teachers, and elders) substituted, one antichrist was put down, and another set up in his place; or the beast was suppressed and his image advanced. And therefore, as they that submit to the prelacy

[x] In his book called, the Differences of the Churches of the Separation. ["The Differences of the Churches of the Separation: contayning a Description of the Leitourgie and Ministerie of the Visible Church: annexed, as a correction and supplement to a litle treatise lately published, bearing title, Principles and inferences concerning the Visible Church, by John Smyth," —4to, Lond. 1608. See p. 24.]

are subject to that woe of worshipping the beast; so they that submit to the triformed presbytery are in like manner liable to that woe denounced against them that worship the image of the beast.

N. C. I perceive what you are going to say: you would have me mark again, how every party paint their opposites in the shape of this ugly beast; to terrify simple people with it, as we do children with bugbears.

C. And whosoever reads and considers these things will be, I think, of old Mr. Bernard's mind, who told this nation three score years ago, that "it is better to endure corruptions in a church, than be turmoiled with such distractions, and to be brought into such confusions: even a Babel of languages of opinions, of assemblies, of governing, government and what not. It is a blessing to be well; but a greater blessing to know it, and so to abide[y]." For besides other separations

[y] Mr. R. Bernard's Plain Evidences, ann. 1610, p. 6. ["Plaine Evidences, the Church of England is Apostolicall, the separation schismaticall. Directed against Mr. Ainsworth the separatist, and Mr. Smith the se-baptist; both of whom severally opposing the booke called the Separatists Schisme: by Richard Bernard, preacher of the word of God at Worsop. For truth and peace, to any indifferent iudgments, set out by authoritie, *anno* 1610." Dedicated to Dr. Toby Mathew archbishop of York. The passage here quoted is extracted from his answer to the 'forespeech' of Ainsworth's work, "Counterpoyson: or considerations touching the poynts in difference betweene the godly ministers and people of the church of England, and the seduced brethren of the separation," printed in 1642; in reply to a previous publication of Bernard's, "Christian advertisements and counsels of peace, also disswasions from the Separatists Schisme commonly called Brownisme," 8vo, Lond. 1608; and to Crashaw's Questions propounded in his sermon at Paul's Cross, Feb. 14, 1607.

Ainsworth's "Counterpoyson," which first appeared anonymously, was attributed in error by Wood to Henry Jacob.—Ath. Oxon. ii. 310.

Richard Bernard, a highly esteemed and temperate presbyterian, was born in 1567, and educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, under the patronage and pecuniary aid of the countess of Warwick. He subsequently became vicar of Worksop in Nottinghamshire, and was appointed, about the year 1613, to the living of Batcombe in Somersetshire, which he seems to have held till his death in March 1641. "He was opposed to a total separation from the church, and wrote with some zeal against the Brownists; but was an enemy to the imposition of human ceremonies in divine worship, and wrote against them as unlawful. He was indeed called a conformable puritan, though he refused to observe many of the ceremonies, and the exact conformity required of the clergy."—Brook's Puritans, ii. 460.]

which I could tell you of, the issue and result of all was this; the decay of all true piety, and a turning all religion into wrangling, censuring and condemning one another. For, as "all that have declined to that schism (mark it, I beseech you, if the character do not concern some of you) are found to be exceeding proud and disdainful towards all that are contrary-minded; yea, even such as (before they were infected with that leaven) were patterns of all love, modesty, and humility to others: so will they not acknowledge nor reverence any of the most excellent graces that God hath given to any of his servants among us, not so much respect them, as the very papists will do. No, they profess greater detestation and despite to the most godly and most sincere men among us, than they do to such as are most notorious in profaneness and malice to the truth[z]." And a divine more ancient than these gave this remarkable description of the fruits produced by separate congregations. "Look upon the people," saith he[a], and "you shall see very many, who not regarding the chief Christian virtues and godly duties; as namely, to be meek, to be patient, to be lowly, to be full of love and mercy, to deal uprightly and justly, to guide their families in the fear of God with wholesome instructions, and to stand fast in the calling in which God hath set them; give themselves wholly to this, even as if it were the sum and pith of religion, namely, to argue and talk continually against matters in the church, against bishops and ministers, and one against another on both sides. Some are proceeded to this, that they will come to the assemblies to hear sermons and prayers of the preacher, but not to the prayers of the book; which I take to be a more grievous sin than many do suppose. But yet this is not the worst, for sundry are gone further and fallen into a damnable schism; and the same so much the more fearful and dangerous, in that many do not see the foulness of it, but rather hold them as godly Christians, and but a little overshot in some matters." Which words I have the rather recited, that you may see what

[z] Confutation of the Separatists agreed upon long since by the joint consent of many nonconformist ministers, published by Mr. W. Rathband, 1644. part 4. [pp. 61, 2.]

[a] Mr. G. Giffard's Plain Declaration; in which he undertakes not to vindicate every thing in our church, but that there was no sufficient cause of separation, an. 1590. [Preface to the Reader. A brief notice of Gifford has been given above, p. 589.]

thoughts the most moderate men heretofore had concerning the way into which you are falling.

N. C. Truly, I can scarce see for what end you have told me all these old stories.

C. That's strange! I was admonishing you of the care that you should take, above all others, not to run into these dangerous paths: who have not only heard all these things from those before us, but also seen with your eyes, and felt by dear experience, the great swarms of sects and heresies that have come out of separate congregations; and the miserable havoc they have made of all true religion and godliness. Now what security, I beseech you, have any of you, that the congregations you begin to draw from us apart to yourselves shall not break in time into as many little fractions, and produce these bitter fruits which I have mentioned? What charm, what power have you to keep out this evil spirit, which always haunted the separation? All the authority which your ministers may think they have, hath no foundation but the passions of the common people. It depends for the most part on the fancies of rude artisans, and ignorant mechanics. These will make their divinity for them; and they must still be inventing new conceits to entertain their imaginations. They are servants to such a world of masters, that it is evident they have reason to fear their own side as much as ours. And when they have done all they can, they are liable to be thought impostors, as oft as any man thinks he is taught of God, and hath a new light shining into his mind. Then shall you see again all those wild fancies fly about which are now in great measure fallen to the ground. Old England may become as mad as the New: and such a woman as Mrs. Hutchinson, that shall take upon her to repeat your sermons as she did those of Mr. Cotton's, may be more cried up than all the ministers you have.

N. C. It is impossible.

C. That which hath been done more than once may be done again. For the "wine of separation" (as two New England ministers call it) hath such a spirit in it, as flies up furiously into men's heads, and works with a restless violence there. It "hurries them headlong," as they speak, "to strange distances; that in separating from public, they separate from private; in separating from corrupt churches, (as no churches,) they sepa-

rate from the purest, even those of their own; in separating from pollutions in God's ordinances, at last they fall to the storming of some, if not the utter renouncing of all the ordinances themselves [b]." "For when rash and sudden men are grown masters of their consciences, it troubles not them from whom they divide, nor whither they run in separate ways." At the very next step they are under the "ministration of the Spirit," as the phrase was in the late time. They live upon pure and naked God in themselves, unclothed of flesh and form. "They are risen and caught up out of the flesh into spirit, out of form into power, out of type into truth, out of shadow into substance, out of the sign into the thing signified. And so they drink wine new in the kingdom, even new in the kingdom; not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit."

N. C. I remember how this wine, as you call it, wrought in the late times, and there are none sigh more than we, to think of the spiritual madness that then raged. And I assure you we bewail and lament with many tears our present divisions, and have kept as many days as there are weeks in the year, to seek the Lord for the healing of our sad breaches.

C. To what purpose is that, as long as you keep them wide open, by withdrawing yourselves from the public assemblies of God's people? You had better spare all that breath; for it is as ridiculous as if a man should cry and roar under the smart of a wound, and yet would not keep himself from raking in it continually with his nails. Why do you not use the means of union, if you truly desire it? What is the cause you follow not such Christian counsel as I made bold the last time to leave with you? That would be more effectual than all those fasts and prayers, which in truth serve only to continue the division, and keep our wounds gaping. For they are the very things, as you use them, which make the schism; and yet they persuade the people you are not to blame, but the bishops only.

N. C. O sir, that you would but lay the saddle upon the right horse! You load us with many accusations, but the bishops are in fault, who will not remove the subject of these contentions. If you were not partial you would admonish them as well as us,

[b] Mr. Allin and Mr. Shepherd's Defence of Nine Positions, pp. 27, 8. [See p. 494, above; for some account of the controversy which gave rise to this publication.]

and tell them they ought not to stand so precisely upon indifferent things, and alter nothing. This would be a short way to remedy all our evils, to take away the things which are offensive to the weak, and so become inconvenient, if not unlawful. And you know who said, that "contentious retaining of customs is a turbulent thing, as well as innovations[c]." Why do you not put them in mind of these things, but spend your time only in telling us our duty?

C. I am not so well conceited of myself, as to think I am alike able to judge what is convenient and what is lawful. For it requires not only great understanding in the nature of things, but also in the nature and temper of men, in the state of affairs at home and abroad; together with diligent and long observation, and indeed all the perfections of a prudent governor, to be able to determine what is most expedient for a church or state. But every Christian may soon resolve or receive satisfaction about what is sinful, or permitted to him. Besides, were I never so skilful, I should not have the confidence (to which it seems you are arrived) to instruct my superiors; it is enough for me to deal with my equals. Though modest proposals and humble desires, without any noise and stir, I presume, would never be disliked from any of us: and had you always taken that course from the beginning, it had been better for you; but you were ever for "assertions and positions," (as my lord Bacon long ago observed[d],) and filled all the nation, as much as you could, with displeasure against their governors, and taught them to esteem the compounding of controversies to savour of man's wisdom and human policy.

N. C. No, we are now for an accommodation.

C. You do well to put in that word now, for it was ever otherways heretofore, and books were written against it (as I will shew you if you desire it) when you hoped to carry all before you. And it is a great argument of your headiness and passion, (to say no more,) that when you had power to accommodate differences you would not; and now you cry out for it, when it is neither in your power nor ours. For why do you say the bishops should remove out of the way the things that trouble you? Have they power to alter laws and change them at their pleasure? Are not they bound up and tied to obedience

[c] [Bacon, Of Church Controversies, Works, vol. vii. p. 49.] [d] [Ibid. p. 31.]

as well as yourselves? All that they can do is but to join their votes together with many other, to settle that religion which is sound and good, it being the foundation of all laws, and the common bond of human society: and when it is established, to take the same care that it be preserved from sudden and unnecessary alterations in any thing belonging to it, which are always dangerous, not only to religion, but to the civil peace. Now, since it is plain they judge it not fit to promote a change because of some men's dislike, and none ought to be desired, in my poor judgment, against the opinion and without the consent of our spiritual governors, who have more wisdom and not less piety sure than we; what have you and I to do but to seek peace and unity some other way without alterations? A schism, you see, is most pernicious, and like to prove most deadly to all religion....

N. C. Let me interpose one thing which I forgot before. We are not formed into churches, and so do not make a strict separation from you as others do.

C. So much the greater danger of all the mischiefs before mentioned; that men should grow wild and mad when they are at such liberty, and under no government but their own fancies. This your ministers cannot but understand well enough; and therefore must either come to us, or cast you into a great many little bodies by yourselves.

N. C. I wish heartily we were united to the main body of your church.

C. I am glad to hear you say so. But if you would have your wishes accomplished, you must contribute with all your power to the ending our quarrels, by studying those things that make for peace. Do not talk of the duty of your governors, but think seriously of your own. And since it is manifest, as I told you, that they judge it not meet to promote any alteration of that which hath been so long settled; and since it is granted by so many of you, that the things enjoined by law are not unlawful, and by so many of us they are thought not to be inconvenient; leave these earnest endeavours to alter the laws, and alter yourselves.

N. C. What would you have us do?

C. I would have you settle yourselves (and not be thus wavering) in this persuasion, that it is lawful to join with us in

the worship of God, as now established: and then resolve that it belongs only to those to determine of the conveniency of things, who have power to do what they best like, and wisdom and judgment to weigh all circumstances, and make choice of the best course: and that if they mistake, their error shall not be imputed to you, who have nothing to do in such matters. After this, weigh seriously and often the great mischiefs of separation, which far exceed all the inconveniences which can be fancied in all our ceremonies. And then your ministers must endeavour to make their acquaintance and followers of this belief, and confirm them in it by coming to the common prayer, and informing them that all the ancient puritans (as they were called) did not hold it unlawful to join with us, but the contrary, to separate from us. Nay, let them teach them that it is a great deal better to do some things which possibly they had rather let alone, than quarrel and break the peace of the Church of God. They have the example of Mr. Calvin for it, who, finding that during his exile from Geneva, they had brought back the use of the wafer-cake of unleavened bread, would not contend about it, though he did not like it[c]. He knew as well as you, it was not commanded by God, and that there was no necessity of it; nay, that this sort of bread had been the invention of the papists, and abused by them to superstition and idolatry; and that they made unleavened bread necessary to the sacrament, and urged it as of divine institution: for which causes he disliked it; but yet he would not strive, though it would not have been to break a custom, but only to go back where he left them, because he saw it would make a rent. Would you would but imitate his discretion, and we

[c] ["Itaque mox reperit male feriatos nonnullos, qui ut pietatis nescio cujus obtentu, iniquissimum illud decretum tegerent, panem communem quo antea in cœna utebantur in azymum censerent converti oportere, scilicet ut novis dissidiis ansam præberent. Neque hoc consilium Satanam fefelisset, nisi Calvinus bonos nonnullos ista mutatione usque adeo offensos ut etiam a cœna sibi abstinendum putarent serio monuisset, ne ob istud *ἀδιάφορον* litem moverent. Sic obtinuit panis azymi usus; de quo etiam postea restitutus Calvinus nunquam contendendum putavit, minime tamen dissimulans quid alioqui magis esset probaturus,"—Beza, Life of Calvin prefixed to his works. An English translation of Beza's biography, made from the French by J. S., appeared in 1564. Compare Hooker, Eccles. Pol. pref. chap. ii. § 3. vol. i. p. 131.]

should see an end of our disputes, especially if you would not be so peremptory; for there can be no peace while you affirm with so much confidence, that this and that doubtful thing is the mind of the Lord. St. Paul was content (as my lord Bacon, I think, somewhere observes[d]) to speak in this manner in some cases; *Thus say I, not the Lord:* and, *according to my counsel.* But now men do so lightly say, "Not I, but the Lord;" yea, and bind it with such heavy denunciations of his judgments; that they distract poor souls that would willingly do all that God would have them, and make differences so wide, that we can never come together. Be modest therefore in your affections, desires, and all your carriage and behaviour; speak well also of the present ministers that conform in every thing to the law, who approve themselves to God and men, by their diligence and piety. Be not ready to proclaim the negligence or perhaps evil manners of any; hear all their instructions with reverence, and if you be otherwise minded in any thing, keep it to yourselves, and make no stir about it. In short, do all that ever you can without sinning; and if you do not condemn nor separate from those who do more than you, then your omissions may be pardoned, and you may more reasonably expect indulgence or accommodation, when you do your duty as well as you are able, than now that you are disobedient, and obstinately refuse to obey authority in things you acknowledge not unlawful.

N. C. But there should be some yielding on both sides.

C. Would you have us yield to those who will not bend to their own reason and conscience? First do what you can, otherwise we cannot so much as yield that you are thoroughly sincere and honest-hearted. And let me admonish you of this also; that unless you reform yourselves in such things as I have mentioned, all that can be fairly yielded will not do the business. For when you have any hope of obtaining all you wish, nothing will serve less than that. It will not content you to have your consciences satisfied, but we must satisfy your fancy too: for I have been informed, that there was some inclination, even in queen Elizabeth's days, to remove the ceremonies of the cross, surplice, and kneeling, if that would give

[d] [Of Church Controversies, Works, vol. vii. p. 31.]

content. But those of your persuasion who were consulted with returned this answer, "that they must not leave a hoof behind:" "Which answer," saith my author[d], "made them all "the faster."

N. C. It was their conscience therefore that was unsatisfied.

C. And there is no hope of satisfying such consciences as still say like Moses to Pharaoh, *Thus saith the Lord,* in every little point. Nothing will please them but pulling down all, and rearing another building after a new model of their own; or, in their phrase, *according to the pattern in the mount.*

N. C. I must talk with you about that anon, if I can; but I hope there are few of these rigid men now among our ministers.

C. Then I have told them the way to peace.

N. C. But it is such a way, I perceive, as would make them only hearers of sermons, not preachers, unless they conform in all things. It would tie up their tongues, and restrain them from the exercise of their ministry; a thing they can never consent unto.

C. The ancient silenced ministers before the war quietly

[d] This sir Fran. Walsingham told Mr. Knewstubs, who related it to Dr. John Burges. ["An Answer rejoyned to that much applauded pamphlet of a namelesse author, bearing this title, viz. A Reply to Dr. Morton's Generall Defence of three nocent ceremonies, &c., the innocency and lawfulnesse whereof is againe in this Rejoinder vindicated. By Dr. Iohn Burges, pastor of Sutton Coldfield in Warwickshire; published by his majesties speciall command." 4to, Lond. 1631. The anonymous Reply was the work of William Ames, published in 1622: bishop Morton's work which elicited it being "A Defence of the innocencie of the three ceremonies of the Church of England, viz. the surplice, crosse after baptisme, and kneeling at the receiving of the blessed sacrament." 4to, Lond. 1610.

"If God shall bring us to accord in these, the strife about conformitie is like to cease: unlesse men be still of that minde that some were of in Queene Elizabeth's time, to whom, when she offered to remoove these ceremonies, if that would give them content, they returned answere, that 'they must not leave one hoofe behind them:' which answer made them all the faster."—

"This," says Burges in the margin, "Sir Fran. Walsingham told Mr. Ia. Knewstubs, of whom I had it."—The Answere to the Replyers preface, p. 52.

Ames prolonged the controversy with "A Fresh suit against human ceremonies in God's worship; or a triplication unto Dr. Burgesse his rejoinder for Dr. Morton."—4to, n. p. 1633.]

suffered this restraint, and thought they might, nay, ought to cease preaching when they were deprived.

N. C. I cannot believe it.

C. It is so notorious, that the Brownists objected this to them a a scrime, that they did acquiesce in the suspension or deprivation of the bishops. But they were so far from thinking it a fault, that they justified it to be a virtue. "For so long," said they, "as the bishops suspend and deprive according to the laws of the land, we account of the action herein as of the act of the church, which we may and ought to reverence and yield unto: if they do otherwise, we have liberty given us by the law to appeal from them. If it be said, that the church is not to be obeyed when it suspends and deprives us, for such causes as we in our consciences think to be insufficient; we answer, that it lies in them to depose that may ordain, and they may shut that may open. And that as he may with a good conscience execute a ministry by the ordination and calling of the church, who is privy to himself of some unfitness, (if the church will press him to it,) so may he who is privy to himself of no fault that deserves deprivation, cease from the execution of his ministry, when he is pressed thereunto by the church. And indeed if a guiltless person, put out of his charge by the church's authority, may yet continue in it, what proceedings can there be against guilty persons, who in their own conceits are always guiltless, or will at least pretend so to be; seeing they also will be ready alway to object against the church's judgment, that they are called of God, and may not therefore give over the execution of their ministry at the will of man[e]?"

N. C. It is notably observed, I must confess: I did not think they had been of this mind.

C. Your ministers that are of any learning know this well enough: but either are a new brood sprung from a mixture of several sects, or else act directly contrarily to their principles. Say which you please, it is indifferent to me: whether do you

[e] A most grave and modest Confutation of the Errors of the Sect called Brownists or Separatists; agreed upon long since by the joint consent of many Ministers then standing out in the cause of Inconformity.—Published by Mr. Rathband, 1644. part 2. [p. 41.]

think their principles are pure derived from the ancient Nonconformists, or that they have only some of their principles, mingled with others of the old Separatists?

N. C. I am sure they cannot endure the name of those Separatists.

C. Why do they countenance their objections then against their forefathers, and act more like them than the Nonconformists?

N. C. It is forgetfulness, I believe. And yet, if they thought they might keep silence, why do they say so oft, *Woe be to me if I preach not the gospel*[f]*?* and, *Whether it be right to hearken to you more than to God, judge ye*[g]*?*

C. That's a question to be asked them rather than me. And their forefathers in nonconformity thought such places unskilfully alleged against them by the Brownists, and that they were nothing to the purpose: their case (and so yours) being so different from the apostles'. "For first, they that inhibited the apostles (they are the words of those ministers concerning the last place) were known and professed enemies to the gospel. Secondly, the apostles were charged not to teach in the name of Christ, nor to publish any part of the doctrine of the gospel; which commandment might more hardly be yielded unto than this of our bishops, who . . . are not only content that the gospel should be preached, but are also preachers of it themselves. Lastly, the apostles received not their calling and authority from men, nor by the hands of men, but immediately from God himself, and therefore might not be restrained or deposed by men: whereas we, though we exercise a function whereof God is the author, and are also called of God to it, yet are we called and ordained by the hand and ministry of men, and therefore may by men be also deposed, and restrained from the exercise of our ministry[h]."

N. C. They seem to speak with great judgment.

C. Would we could but hear you discourse now thus wisely and solidly; it would gain you great respect, and make every body in love with you, whatsoever differences there were between us. But to hear men only babble in Scripture language,

[f] 1 Cor. ix. 16.
[g] Acts iv. 19, 20.
[h] A most grave and modest Confutation, &c., part 2. [pp. 41, 2.]

so ignorantly as if they were mere novices in Christian religion, and yet so confidently as if they were apostles, it cannot but disgust all rational persons. Besides, would not any man think that many of your ministers were carried more by humour than piety, and regarded more their own interest than that of religion, when he hears them crying out, *Necessity is laid upon us;* and *Woe be to us, if we preach not the gospel;* and yet they preach it only where there is no need, and that with a greater breach of the laws than if they preached in other places? Why do they not instruct the country people (if they must preach) where they say the cures are worst served? I doubt they see their condition would be woeful indeed, if they preached the gospel there; and therefore they should have added two words to the apostle's speech, and said, *Woe be to us, if we preach not the gospel in London.* There is little to be got by preaching it to the poor country folk. Those are barren places to sow the seed in, and will bring forth small profit to themselves. And so they would do well to say in plain English, (and I should think them honester men if they did,) *Necessity is laid upon us:* to tell you the truth, "We must preach to get a living."

N. C. I have heard them say that they have searched their hearts often——

C. So did the army, as I told you, and were never the better for that.

N. C. And they find that they mean uprightly; and that it doth not condemn them of *consulting with flesh and blood.*

C. I find that they apishly imitate the apostles without their spirit; and run about with their words in their mouths, when they leave the sense behind. As if when they want the things the apostles had, it were some comfort to them that they can keep their glorious phrase and style. Did they never consult, think you, one with another what to do?

N. C. Yes, without doubt.

C. And what are they, I beseech you? Are they turned on a sudden into spirits? Have they left the body, since they left our churches, and become separated substances, since they became Separatists?

N. C. What do you mean?

C. Nay, what do you mean, thus vainly to affect the apostle's

phrase? who intended nothing else, when he said that he did not *consult with flesh and blood*[i] after God was pleased to give him an immediate commission to preach Christ, but that he did not confer and deliberate with any mortal men, like himself, whether he should go about that work or no. And truly in this sense I doubt your ministers consulted too much *with flesh and blood,* when they considered whether they should conform to the orders of the church or no. They applied themselves to your humour, and thought whether you would not be displeased to see them do that which they had rashly condemned or slighted, and hear them *preach up that which they had destroyed.* Saint Paul indeed stood not upon this, and would not hearken to what men said: but they I doubt had more of his words than of his mind, and sat listening a great while to the voice of flesh and blood about this matter. And I wish they did not consult too much with it about other things, and did not baulk displeasing doctrines. Otherwise, why do they not teach you in an honest manner, as the old Nonconformists did, that the ancient church of God used a form of prayer and praises, as every body knows[k]? And that our Saviour bade his disciples when they prayed to say, *Our Father, &c.*, which he would never have done if it had not been lawful for us in making our prayers to God to use the very same words. And that it is an absurd and frivolous exception to say, We never read that the apostles did use a prescript form of words; for if this be sufficient to excuse us from doing what God expressly commands or manifestly permits, that we never read the apostles or saints did it, then we must not, or need not, baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, because we never find they used those words; or that they baptized infants, or that they prayed, or rendered acknowledgments to the Holy Ghost. And further, why do they not teach you that even upon extraordinary occasions, which require great and special fervency of spirit, it is lawful to use a form of words, as our blessed Saviour did in his agony, Matt. xxvi. 42, 45[l]? And again, not only those forms which we frame our-

[i] Gal. i. 16.

[k] There being, say they, confessions, prayers, psalms, reading of the Scriptures, exhortations, solemn blessing used in their synagogues.

[l] And so the prophets had appointed, as they gather from Hos. xiv. 2, and Joel ii. 17.

selves, but which have been composed by others; as Solomon, they observed, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, all used the very words that David had done before. Nay, further yet, that the people of God have used a set form of words in extraordinary occasions, which were appointed long before those occasions fell out. Daniel, for instance, used the words that Solomon had commended in case of captivity[m]: and Ezra uses the form of thanksgiving which Jeremiah had appointed, say they, to be used after their return from captivity[n]. And more than this, that it is lawful to use not only those forms which are in the Scripture, but such as in the compiling and collecting them the invention and such other gifts of men are used. "There being a liberty" (as the Separatists themselves heretofore confessed) "left in the church to do many things that tend only to the setting forth God's ordinances. As in preaching of the word, and in those prayers which they call *conceived prayers*, the wit, memory, judgment, and such other human gifts are lawfully and necessarily used. Especially considering, that the people's understanding and memory may be better helped by that they are well acquainted withal, than by the other. . . . And then, if forms thus devised by men be found to be lawful and profitable, what sin can it be for the governors of the church to command that such forms be used, or for us to use them (being persuaded of their lawfulness) when they are imposed? Unless any body will say, that therefore it is unlawful for us to hear the word, receive the sacraments, believe the Trinity and all other articles of the faith, because we are commanded by the magistrate so to do: whereas indeed we ought the rather to do good things that are agreeable to the word, when we know them to be also commanded by the Christian magistrate." These are the very words of your ancient writers against the Brownists or Separatists[o]. Let but

[m] Dan. ix. 5, compared with 1 Kings viii. 47.

[n] Vide Psalm cxxxvi, compared with Jer. xxxiii. 11, and Ezra iii. 11.

[o] In the book published by Mr. W. Rathband, part i. ["Confutation of the Separatists," &c. p. 14.] but taken, I find, out of a more ancient writer, Mr. Rich. Bernard's Confutation of the Errors of Barrow and Greenwood, ann. 1608. pp. 191, 192, &c. ["Certain positions held and maintained by some godlie ministers of the Gospell against those of the Separation, and namely, against Barrow and Greenwood;" appended to "Christian Advertisements and counsels of peace, also disswasions

your ministers, not consulting the people's fancies and desires, faithfully inculcate these truths, and endeavour to graft them in their minds; it will give a great testimony of their sincerity, and I am sure it will go a great way to make up our sad divisions. If they will not press these things more than any thing else for the present, (there being such great necessity of it,) we can give no other reason of their silence, but that they consult their own interest, and are loath to leave their private meetings: and then, considering their known and declared principles, I shall be forced to use a word of one of their great enemies, (though I protest I am sincerely their friend,) and say, they are of the most ancient sect of the Autocatacrits[p], (the self-condemned,) the worst of all sectaries.

N. C. I have heard our ministers acknowledge all this; and therefore what needs thus many words?

C. Acknowledge it, man? I would not only have them say so when they are asked, (as if it were a sorrowful confession whispered in the ear,) but publish it aloud on all occasions; that so they may call back those sheep that are gone astray by their means. Let every one of them, the next time you meet, speak to the people in their own language, and say, "Come, let us go up out of this Babel and confusion; let us return to Sion, though it be with weeping and supplication. There the Lord dwelleth, and there he is truly worshipped." For whatsoever they may acknowledge sometime, the poor people (whom I pity with all my soul) are strangely and passionately possessed with an opinion of the sinfulness of being present at our divine service. Many of them esteem one of our ministers, how well-soever qualified and diligent in his calling, however blameless and exemplary in his conversation, no better than a corrupt man, a timeserver, a formalist, popishly affected, or at least a man blinded and deceived through ignorance. Nay, there are those who call them the sons of perdition, and make them men of no conscience. Some have questioned whether they may marry a conformist; as if they were the people of a strange

from the Separatists schisme, commonly called Brownisme, &c., published for the benefit of the humble and godlie lover of the trueth, by Richard Bernard, preacher of God's word."—8vo, Lond. 1608.]

[p] J. Goodwin's Obstruction of Justice, p. 68. [Ὑβριστοδίκαι, or the "Obstructours of Justice," a sermon in defence of the sentence passed upon the king, § 64. p. 68.—4to, Lond. 1649.]

God. To hear such a minister they look upon as a great crime: at least they think if any other be to be found, they must go to the Non-conformist, though far the weaker man. And as if they thought that to be godliness in themselves which they call tyranny in other men; there are some that impose this upon their children, never to hear the Common Prayer; and charge them, as I have heard, upon their blessing, to obey them in this command. And when for very shame they cannot but acknowledge the gifts of some ministers; then they limit the use of them only to the information of men's minds in the letter of the Scripture, and discovering gross sins: but that they may convert souls, and work faith and repentance in them, they very much doubt, if not flatly deny. Nay, so far doth this conceit carry some of them, that they will scarce give a friendly countenance or salutation to us: and they commonly call any small company of their own party, the Church, the People of God, the Christians of such a town; as if we had no portion in Christ, but they had got him wholly to themselves. These humours were observed in the old Separatists: and since they abound in you also, there is great need to warn you to purge out the old leaven, lest it be transmitted from generation to generation.

N. C. But though a set form be lawful, yet it is useless; because there is no able minister that needs one: and we ought not to provide crutches for those that are not able, but rather remove them.

C. You would fain be governors, I see, not subjects; and we should have fine doings if you were in the throne; unless you were as wise and honest as some of your predecessors have been, who made this discreet answer to your exception: There may be good ministers, who want the gift of extemporary conceptions of prayer, and by consequence need a form. "For Saint Paul, setting down the requisites to a bishop," saith Master Geree[q], "1 Tim. iii. Tit. i. neither names nor intimates this for one of them. And where the Scripture speaks of ministerial gifts given to the edification of the church, this gift of prayer is never mentioned[r]." Tell me then if a man have all

[q] Resolution of Ten Cases, licensed by Mr. Cranford and dedicated to Mr. Rich. Capel, *an.* 1644. [Quest. 9. p. 46.]

[r] 1 Cor. i. to the xi. Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. Eph. iv. 11, 12.

that St. Paul requires in a bishop, and yet wants this gift, is he a lawful minister of the gospel or not? No doubt there are such, who cannot express themselves without confusion, or to the edification of others without the help of a form; and experience tells us very excellent men have constantly tied themselves to it: as Dr. Taylor, a courageous witness to the truth, used the Communion-book even in private, when he was in prison, and bequeathed it as a legacy to his wife. He instances also in Dr. Sibs and Mr. Hildersham, who used constantly one form of prayer before their sermons. And I find indeed the two last sermons of the doctor, sent abroad by two eminent men, with that prayer before them[s]."

[s] Upon John xiv. 1. published by Mr. Tho. Goodwin and Mr. Philip Nye, and dedicated to my lord of Warwick. ["Two Sermons upon the first words of Christ's last Sermon, John xiiii. 1. being also the last sermons of Richard Sibbs, D.D. preached to the honourable society of Grayes Inne, June the 21 and 28. 1635. Who the next Lord's day following died, and rested from all his labours."—Lond. 4to. 1636.

The Prayer is not contained in the first edition published as above, in 1636, but is prefixed to the second, published in 4to, the same year, and the third in 8vo, the year following.

"In prayer," is Geree's remark, "men many times limit themselves, as Doctor Sibbs is said to use one forme of prayer before his sermons, printed by Mr. Goodwin, and Mr. Nye; so did Mr. Hildersham, and many famous divines on this side sea and beyond: and if another man should take one of these printed formes and use them, why we may not as well joine with it in the one as in the other, is a mystery to me." —Geree, Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, p. 51. 4to, Lond. 1644.]

By which you may see the Assembly were much out of the way, when they told you, "the Lord Jesus furnishes all those whom he calls to the ministry with this gift of prayer." Or else these men were among the "idle and unedifying ministry, who did not put forth themselves to exercise their gift."—Preface to the Directory. ["Add hereunto (which was not foreseen, but since hath come to pass), that the liturgy hath been a great means, on the one hand to make and increase an idle and unedifying ministry, which contented itself with set forms made to their hands by others, without putting forth themselves to exercise the gift of prayer, with which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaseth to furnish all his servants whom he calls to the office; so on the other side it hath been (and ever would be, if continued,) a matter of endless strife and contention in the church, and a snare, both to many godly and faithful ministers, who have been persecuted and silenced upon that occasion, and to others of hopeful parts, many of which have been, and more still would be, diverted from all thoughts of the ministry to other studies; especially in these later times, wherein God vouchsafeth to his people more and better means for the discovery of error and superstition, and for attaining of knowledge in the mysteries of godliness,

N. C. I have many things to say about forms of prayer, and yours in particular; especially about the imposing them, if you have the patience to hear me.

C. With all my heart: only contract what you have to say, because I have some business stays for me.

N. C. You have seen a book, I perceive, which hinders several persons, I am told, from joining with you; and they think is unanswerable.

C. What Goliah should that be?

N. C. It is called, "Common Prayer Book Devotions, Episcopal Delusions: or the Second Death of the Service-Book[t]."

C. A terrible giant-like title.

N. C. The Preface to which seems to call your ministers the "sons of perdition[u]," as you just now noted.

C. O, I remember now; it is said by his friends to be writ by Mr. J. Goodwin, and printed in the wonderful year 1666, when they thought to see us tumble down with a powder.

N. C. It is full of his peculiar phrases, and therefore———

C. I am not concerned at all who was the author: let us consider what he says. I took it to be a piece so foul and scurrilous; nay, so profane and blasphemous, against those devotions wherein so many thousand souls offer up themselves to God, that I never expected to hear you name it without abhorrence.

N. C. You pass a very hard sentence on it.

C. If you had read the first two leaves seriously, you would not say so. Where, as if he imagined himself in a tennis court,

and gifts in preaching and prayer." —Preface to the Directory; given at length by Neal in the Appendix to his Hist. of the Puritans, vol. v. p. lxiv.

[t] ["Common Prayer Book Devotions, Episcopal Delusions; or the Second Death of the Service-book, wherein the unlawfulness (with advantage) of the imposition of liturgies, or stinted forms of prayer, or of the worship of God (and more especially of the English Service-book) is clearly and plainly demonstrated from the Scriptures, and grounds in reason; with answers to the arguments and pleas insisted on, in defence of the said impositions."—4to, Lond. 1666. The tract is anonymous, but the preface is signed C. W.]

[u] [..."and although Filii perditionis may tug hard to justle Jesus Christ out of his throne, and to sit paramount in the temple of God, chopping and changing divine institutions for humane inventions, yet the day is at hand when the builder of the Gospel-temple shall plead his right with fury poured out."—Preface by C. W.]

when he chanced to peep into a church, he rudely calls the minister's and people's answering one another, "bandying and tossing of devotions to and again[x]," (a witty expression, you think, but borrowed, alas, as the rest of his book, from the railers that were before him[y]). Nay, his fancy stepped immediately from thence into an ale-house; and he tells us that "these devotions much resemble the jolly scene of a set of ale-inspired companions, chanting their drunken catches upon a bench." Which is such a lewd and impious scoff at the devotions inspired by the Holy Ghost, (which directed the ancient saints thus to answer one another[z],) that, to speak in Mr. J. Goodwin's phrase, he must be the firstborn of profaneness, who can deliberately commend such writings.

N. C. But what do you say to the rest of the book?

C. I say he was in such a choleric fit, and laid so furiously about him when he writ it, that neither the admirable Song of

[x] [P. 3.]

[y] It is as old as the Admonition in queen Elizabeth's time. ["In all their order of service there is no *edification*, according to the rule of the apostle (1 Cor. xiv. 16.), but only confusion. They tosse the psalmes in most places like tennice balles."—First Admonition to the Parliament, § 13. ascribed to Field and Wilcox, 12mo, 1572: having appended to it "A View of Popish abuses, a letter of Rodolph Gualter, minister at Zurich, and Beza's letter to the bishop of London, dated Geneva, 5 Cal. Jul. 1566. In his Reply to Whitgift's Answer to his second Admonition, Cartwright remarks:—"The singing of psalms by course, and side after side, although it be very ancient, yet it is not commendable, and so much the more to be suspected, for that the devil hath gone about to get it so great authority, partly by deriving it from Ignatius' time, (Socrat. vi. 8.) and partly in making the world believe that this came from heaven, and that angels were heard to sing after this sort; which, as it is a mere fable, so is it confuted by historiographers, whereof some ascribe the beginning of this to Damasus, (Plut. vit. Damas. p. 48.) some unto Flavianus and Diodorus (Theod. ii. 24.) From whencesoever it came, it cannot be good, considering that when it is granted that all the people may praise God, (as it is in singing of psalms), there this ought not to be restrained unto a few, and where it is lawful both with heart and voice to sing the whole psalm, there it is not meet that they should sing but the one half with their heart and voice, and the other with their heart only. For where they may both with heart and voice sing, there the heart is not enough: therefore, besides that incommodity which cometh this way, in that being tossed after this sort, men cannot understand what is sung, these other two inconveniences came of this form of singing, and therefore is banished in all reformed churches."—Reply to Whitgift, p. 203. ed. 1. Reprinted in Whitgift's works, vol. iii. pp. 384, 6.]

[z] [Exod. xv. 1, 21; Rev. xv. 3.]

St. Ambrose, nor the Creed itself, (which bears the name of the Apostles',) could escape with fair quarter.

N. C. Not the Creed?

C. No: for he blames the liturgy, for enjoining us to make confession of our faith in that form of words; because, saith he, it contains that, "which I believe no man understands upon any good grounds what it means, viz. the descent of Christ into hell."

N. C. Read his words again. Doth no man understand——

C. Not one; if his belief be right, which is exceeding large in this point, though very strait in other things.

N. C. High presumption, you should say, not belief. Have not our writers given a very good account of this article?

C. I know not so well what yours have done; I am sure ours, both bishops and priests, have explained it: witness the late primate of Ireland[z], bishop Bilson[a], and Dr. Pierson[b] in his excellent book upon the Creed.

N. C. And when the assembly debated this, among other exceptions brought in against the three Creeds, a learned doctor told them, (in a speech of his,) that "all the Christians in the world acknowledged Christ's descent into hell some way or other: either locally, as many of the ancient fathers, Latimer the martyr, Bilson, Andrews, Nowell in his Catechism; or virtually, as Durandus; or metaphorically, as Mr. Calvin; or metonymically, as Tilenus, Perkins, and the assembly." And therefore since there are so many ways to explain the words, he desired that (after the example of the harmony of confessions) the assembly "would content themselves with branding only the popish exposition of the article, which takes hell for a part of purgatory," where they suppose the souls of the fathers to have laid.

C. I remember well the words. It was Dr. Featly[c] who made

[z] [Ussher, Answer to the Jesuit's challenge, Works, vol. iii. pp. 278–419.]

[a] ["The Survey of Christ's Sufferings for man's Redemption, and his descent to Hades or hell for our deliverance."—fol. Lond. 1604.]

[b] [Pearson's name is spelt variously even during his lifetime, Pierson or Pearson. His great work on the Creed appeared in 4to, 1659.]

[b] Sacra Nemesis, p. 16. ["Sacra Nemesis, the Levites Scourge, or Mercurius Britan-civicus disciplined: also diverse remarkable disputes and resolves in the Assembly of divines related, episcopacy asserted, truth righted, innocency vindicated against detraction." — 4to, Oxford, 1644.

this speech: but alas! all these men that we have named understood nothing. They knew not (poor souls!) what they said when they made confession of their faith, or they had no reason worth a rush for what they believed. Nay, all the Christian world do but babble in their devotions, if you will take the word of this triumphant writer; excepting alway such as himself, who have no creed at all that ever I heard of; I mean, make no confession of their faith when they meet together.

N. C. They are offended perhaps with those words, else they would use the Apostles' Creed, as it is commonly called.

C. That is not the business; for he scoffs, as I told you, at the song of St. Ambrose, though it contain an incomparable acknowledgment of Almighty God, and the principal points of Christian faith, and hath none of those words in it. "This is no more fit," in his conceit, "to be used in divine service, together with the Psalms of David, than an ass was to be yoked with an ox in the same plough, under the law of Moses." Had he the same opinion, think you, of one of his own hymns, (or rhymes rather,) though never so flat and insipid? No, I warrant you. They were divinely inspired, heaven-born songs, no less canonical than the Psalms of David.

N. C. They had no such thought of them.

C. Why then did they join them with the holy Scriptures in God's service? How durst they yoke together things so different as those made by God and those made by man? Or if

Featley, the last provost of Chelsea college, having been expelled the Assembly, deprived of his livings, and placed in confinement in Lord Petre's house in Aldgate, in Sept. 1643, on the detection of his clandestine communication to Ussher of matters debated in the Assembly, published anonymously this vindication of his conduct, in which he complains bitterly of the misrepresentations which had appeared in the pages of Mercurius Britannicus. In the same pamphlet are included his two speeches before the Assembly, on the subject of the eighth article and the descent into hell, in the first of which the present passage occurs.

A full account of the circumstances which led to his expulsion and punishment, and which have been placed in widely different lights by writers on one side or the other, will be found in Clarendon's History, book vii. p. 254. edit. 1849, which is on the whole very unfavourable to Featley.

The correct family name of this divine was Fairclough, thence corrupted gradually to Featley, as his nephew John relates in his Life, quoted by Bliss in his note on Wood's Athen. Oxon. iii. 157.]

that were lawful, why are we blamed for using the Song of St. Ambrose in divine service? Nay, why did he call our Liturgy upon this account a "medley of things, canonicals and apocryphals[c]," no more fit to be moulded together in evangelical worship, than those creatures I mentioned to be coupled in the same plough?

N. C. I know no reason for it.

C. Nor will you ever find a reason why another famous book[d] of yours in the late times said, that the "solemn salutes and demi-adorations of St. John Baptist, and the blessed Virgin, were left still in the Common Prayer-book by our reformers." There is no occasion at all for this calumny, unless he thought Magnificat and Benedictus were two popish hymns, whereby we honoured those saints; as it were easy, I think, to persuade many of their ignorant and credulous followers. Nay, they who can be content to hear us compared to a knot of ale-inspired companions, when we sing those words of the Holy Ghost, may, for any thing I know, be taught to rail upon Magnificat and Benedictus, as if they were but certain drunken catches.

N. C. You are too severe.

C. I abhor severity where gentleness is the proper cure. But St. Paul tells Titus, that *unruly* and *vain-talkers*, and *de-*

[c] [P. 2.] He adds a heap of other words, as his manner is, when these would have been sufficient.

[d] Vox Populi, part ii. p. 3. [In the month of August, 1642, appeared a short anonymous pamphlet bearing the title of "Vox Populi, or, the People's humble discovery of their own loyaltie, and his Majesties ungrounded jealousie;" in which the recent policy of the King is denounced, but in very moderate language, and his Majesty implored to cast away all distrust of his subjects, and to return to his Parliament: "and so," concludes the author, "unto your state and glory; where, when your royall assent hath confirmed those necessary priviledges, which may keepe whole the consciences and estates of your most loyall subjects, all this our body falls into atomes, and your Majesty alone remaines in glory, to be beheld the preserver of those priviledges, which all our long and faithfull endeavours have consulted with your Majesty."

The sequel to this tract, quoted by Patrick, was published shortly after:—

"The Second Part of Vox Populi, being the People's Report unto the King upon the severall appeales declared in his Majesties name. An egge long since hatch't and covered, and now fledg'd, and upon the wing toward the deserts of his Majesties present abode. May it prove a Dove with an olive branch to prepare his resting on these Mountaines of Ararat." It is dated Oct. 28th, 1642.]

ceivers, must be *rebuked sharply*[e]. And there needs no other witness that there are such among them, (whose mouths must be stopped,) than the prefacer to the book we are speaking of: a confident *ignoramus*, who struts as if he were some great man, and makes a rattling with his big words as if he had some mighty matter to tell us; but in effect hath just nothing, except two or three gross and palpable falsehoods, of which I will make him ashamed, if he have not a very brazen forehead.

N. C. Do you think he would lie for Christ?

C. I think he is a bold and vain talker of things he understands not: what more, do you judge when you have heard what I have to say. If the book was writ by the person beforenamed, as his disciples affirm, then he tells us one notorious tale when he saith, "The author . . . ended his days in a kind of exile," for adhering to this truth, defended in his book, viz. that nothing ought to be imposed in the worship of God. For it is well known by all that understand any thing of our affairs, that Mr. John Goodwin suffered no banishment of any kind, but was disabled from his office (though there had been no Common Prayer) for intermeddling so much in the late civil quarrels, and writing a book to justify the horrid murder of our late sovereign. But to let that pass. He asks us, you remember, "Where were more learned, more godly men in the world, than Cartwright, Parker, Reynolds, Greenham, Ames? And who knoweth not that these and many more of the same heavenly stamp, suffered extreme persecution, deprivations and banishments, rather than they would touch with the graven images, the work of the craftsmen that then were, and now are, the snares and nets upon Mispeh and Tabor?"

N. C. I remember them very well.

C. And is he not an abominable reviler, in reproaching us with idolatry, and the worship of graven images?

N. C. But where are the falsehoods?

C. Is that none, think you? But those I now intend are, that he makes those men against a stinted form of worship who were for it; and to suffer extreme persecution on that account, who suffered none at all, much less banishment. Other untruths there are, but these are sufficient to make him blush, if he have any of that virtuous colour left.

N. C. Was not Cartwright of his mind?

[e] Tit. i. 13.

C. No; for he declared his meaning was not to disallow of a prescript form of prayer, and an uniform order in the church. His quarrel was only with some things in our Service-book; but yet he professed he did not oppose the ceremonies as simply unlawful, but only as inconvenient[e]. And therefore persuaded the preachers rather to wear the surplice, than cease their ministry, and the people to receive the sacrament kneeling, if they could not have it other ways; because, though that gesture was, as he conceived, incommodious, yet not simply unlawful[f]. All which, and a great deal more, I will prove out of his own works, and other good authors, if it be contradicted; as also that he lost his[g] professor's place at Cambridge upon other ac-

[e] [The gradual advance of puritanism, from privately objecting to a few matters of ceremonial or vesture to the uncompromising demands of the ultra-Brownists, for the utter extinction of the church system and ritual, is exhibited by Thomas Cooper, bishop of Winchester, under four successive stages. In the third of which he places such as Cartwright, Travers, Field, &c., as "affirming that those matters touching apparell were but trifles, and not worthie contention in the church; but that there were greater things farr of more weight and importance, and indeede touching faith and religion, and therefore meete to be altered in a church rightly refourmed; as the Booke of Common Prayer, the administration of the sacraments, the government of the church, the electing of ministers, and a number of other like."—Admonition to the people of England, in answer to Martin Mar-Prelate, 4to, Lond. 1589. p. 158, quoted by Keble on Hooker, E. P. pref. ii. 10.]

[f] [See T. C. Answer to Whitgift, pp. 25, 166; and The Rest of the Second Reply, p. 242 sqq.]

[g] [Cartwright was finally deprived of the Margaret Professorship of Divinity by Whitgift, then Vice-chancellor, and the other heads of the University, December 11, 1570. The following articles, previously drawn up and promulgated by him, on which the judicial proceedings against him were grounded, set forth the true nature of the doctrines held by him at that time. It will be seen that his objections to the established order of the church related more to matters of constitutional government and discipline, than minute details of ritual and ceremonies.

1. "Archiepiscoporum et archidiaconorum nomina, simul cum muneribus et officiis, sunt abolenda.

2. "Legitimorum in ecclesia ministrorum nomina, qualia sunt episcoporum et diaconorum, separata a suis muneribus in verbo Dei descriptis, simpliciter sunt improbanda, et ad institutionem apostolicam revocanda; ut episcopus in verbo et precibus, diaconus in pauperibus curandis versetur.

3. "Episcoporum cancellariis, aut archidiaconorum officialibus &c. regimen ecclesiæ non est committendum, sed ad idoneum ministrum et presbyterum ejusdem ecclesiæ deferendum.

4. "Non oportet ministrum esse vagum et liberum, sed quisque debet certo cuidam gregi addici.

5. "Nemo debet ministerium tanquam candidatus petere.

6. "Episcoporum tantum auctoritate, et potestate, ministri non sunt creandi, multo minus in mu-

counts, and after all went to Warwick, where he was born, and died in the discharge of his office as their minister[h]. And Mr. Edwards, I remember, tells us[i], that he citing a passage out of Mr. Cartwright's Comments on the Proverbs, in a sermon he preached a little before the wars, to persuade the people to take heed of the White Devil[j], viz., the separation upon greater pretence of purity; Mr. John Goodwin came to him when he had done, and gave him great thanks for it. As for Mr. Parker,

sæo, aut loco quopiam clancularío; sed ab ecclesia electio fieri debet.

" Hisce reformandis quisque pro sua vocatione studere debet. Vocationem autem intelligo, ut magistratus auctoritate, minister verbo, omnes precibus promoveant. Per me Thomam Cartwright."—Clark's life of Cartwright appended to his Martyrology, p. 18. Strype's Whitgift, vol. iii. append. p. 19.

In a letter to Cecil, chancellor of the University, July 9, 1570, in vindication of his readings, he solemnly professes " oblatam etiam de vestibus occasionem prætereundo dissimulasse :" and he encloses a testimonial from several members who had attended his lectures to the same effect. " Nos vero, quorum nomina subscripta sunt, et qui illis lectionibus interfuimus, ex quibus iste rumor fluxit, testamur nullas quas unquam audire potuimus, unde simultates aut discordias emersisse: de vestibus controversiam ne attigisse quidem, de ministerio proposuisse quædam, quorum ad amussim nostrum hoc formari cupiebat, sed ea et cautione et moderatione, quæ illum debebant, merito tueri, et ab ista quæ circumfertur calumnia vindicare."—Strype, Annals, vol. ii. part 1. p. 2; part 2. p. 411.

It would appear, however, that Cartwright's teaching did not at all times assume the same tone of moderation and indifference with respect to ceremonial observances. He and two others are said to have declaimed so vehemently one Lord's day in three sermons in the college chapel against the ceremonies and use of the surplice, that at evening prayer all the collegians except three cast off their surplices, and appeared in chapel without them.—Fuller, Hist. of Cambridge, p. 140. Paul's Life of Whitgift, p. 12.

[h] [Cartwright died at the age of sixty, Dec. 27, 1603, being at the time master of the hospital at Warwick, and having for some time preached temperately, without giving offence, in pursuance of his pledge given to Whitgift.—Fuller, x. 7. vol. v. p. 252, 264. Strype's Whitgift, ii. 459. The latter writer quotes a passage from sir H. Yelverton's epistle to the reader, prefixed to bishop Morton's " Episcopacy justified," to the effect that Cartwright on his death-bed " seriously lamented the unnecessary troubles he had caused in the church, by the schism he had been the great fomenter of; and wished he was to begin his life again, that he might testify to the world the dislike he had of his former ways."]

[i] [In the preface to the third part of his Gangræna.]

[j] [An expression derived from the satirical dialogues of Pierre Viret of Geneva; the third of which, termed the Dialogue des Diables blancs, was published in English by Day and Seres, with the title of the Dialogue of White Devils, and is alluded to above, p. 465.]

he indeed went further and said, the ceremonies were unlawful either to be imposed or used. But he was far from being so great a scholar as this man fancies; at least, his learning was not well digested; for taking upon him to maintain that popish idolatry is every whit as bad as pagan, he brings a passage out of St. Augustine to justify this, that a heretic is worse than a pagan. Which are the words of another man, whom Saint Augustine in that place confutes, and asks him by what rule he concluded this, seeing our Lord said, *If he hear not the church, let him be to thee as an heathen*, not worse than an heathen; by which you may see how forward men of this spirit are, to catch at any thing that may seem to favour their opinions, and to make a show of learning when they think it will serve them, though they slight and undervalue it as a carnal weapon, when it is in their adversaries' hands. And if I thought this man understood him, I should imagine he had learnt of Mr. Parker to magnify those of his own party beyond their deserts; for he extols the refusing of conformity, as such a singular piece of service done to God, that he compares such persons as were therefore deprived to David's worthies, and the three hundred men that followed Gideon. Most brave flourishes! how can you choose but yield yourself captive to such champions; believing this prefacer upon his word, that those he musters up were in the number of the worthies? But he belies Mr. Greenham too, as I am able to prove from good testimony, even from himself; but for brevity's sake, I shall only let you know, that Dr. John Burges assures us, that on "his own knowledge, and in his hearing, Mr. Greenham denied to persuade any man against the use of the ceremonies; and professed he would be loath to be put to the solution of this objection, (as he called it,) "Wear the surplice, or preach not[1];" which is an argument, that though he did not like them,

[1] [See "An Answer rejoyned to that much applauded pamphlet of a namelesse author, bearing this title: viz., A Reply to Dr. Mortons generall Defence of three nocent Ceremonies, &c., the innocency and lawfulnesse whereof is againe in this rejoynder vindicated; by Dr. John Burges, Master of Sutton Coldfield, in Warwickshire; published by his Majesties speciall command."—4to. Lond. 1631.

Greenham's words are taken from "The Apologie or answere of Master Grenham, minister of Dreaton, unto the bishop of Ely, being commaunded to subscribe, and to use the Romish habite, with allowance of

yet he did not hold them unlawful, much less idolatrous, as this ignorant writer would persuade us. I can prove also that he abuses Dr. Ames, but that I make haste to tell you, the most palpable forgery of all is the putting Dr. Reynolds into the catalogue of his mighty men; and since he pretends to understand Latin, I will send him, for his more full conviction, to an author, no less learned than that excellent doctor, and a far better scholar than any of the rest; and that is Dr. Richard Crackanthorp, who tells the archbishop of Spalato that the doctor was no puritan, (as he called him,) but he himself a calumniator[k]. For first, he professed that he appeared unwillingly in the cause at Hampton Court, and merely in obedience to the king's command; and then, he spake not one word there against the hierarchy. Nay, he acknowledged it to be consonant to the word of God, in his conference with Hart[l]; and in an answer to Sanders's book, Of the Schism of England, (which is in the archbishop's library,[m]) he professes that he approves of the book of consecrating and ordering bishops, priests, and deacons. He was a strict observer also of all the orders of the church and university, both in public and his own college; wearing the square cap and surplice, kneeling at the sacrament, and he himself commemorating their benefactors at the times their statutes appointed, and reading that chapter out of Ecclesiasticus, which is on such occasions used. In a letter also of his to archbishop Bancroft, (then in Dr. Crackanthorp's hands,) he professes himself conformable to the Church of England willingly and from his heart, his conscience admonishing him so to be; and thus he remained persuaded to his last breath, desiring

the com. booke:"—p. 86, of an anonymous quarto volume without date or place, "A parte of a Register contayninge sundrie remarkable matters, written by divers godly and learned in our time, which stand for, and desire the reformation of our Church, in Discipline and Ceremonies, accordinge to the pure worde of God, and the Lawe of our Lande."

The passage was quoted by Burges, (chap. iv. sect. 20. p. 560.) from John Sprint's "Cassander Anglicanus, shewing the necessity of conformitie to the prescribed ceremonies of our Church, in case of deprivation."—4to, Lond. 1618, pp. 162, 3.]

[k] Defens. Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, &c., cap. 69. pag. 419. an. 1529. [1625.]

[l] [See chap. 10, of "The Summe of the Conference betweene Iohn Rainoldes and Iohn Hart, touching the Head and the Faith of the Church:"—p. 669, sqq. 4to, Lond. 1584.]

[m] [It is not to be found in the library at Lambeth. It is mentioned by Wood, Athen. Oxon. ii. 17.]

to receive absolution, according to the manner prescribed in our liturgy, when he lay on his death bed; which he did from Dr. Holland, the king's professor in Oxford, kissing his hand in token of his love and joy, and within a few hours after resigned up his soul to God. What think you now? Was Dr. Reynolds one of those that abominated our worship, "suffered extreme persecution, deprivation, and banishment too?" Or must he, that lately stood among the most learned and godly men in the world, be now blotted out, and put in the black list of idolaters, and "touchers with graven images?" What say you? will you never see how these men deceive you? Must the most knowing men on our side, that report things to us from solid testimony, be thought liars, and these impudent sots be believed on their bare word?

N. C. I am convinced he understood nothing of these matters.

C. And yet he writes like a teacher, though I believe he never studied their own writers about these points; if he had, the silenced ministers in those days would have taught him a great part of what I have said: for they have told us in print[m], that "most of those ministers appointed to speak for them at Hampton Court were not of their choosing, or nomination, or judgment in the matters then in question, but of a clean contrary. For being entreated at that time to dispute against those things as simply evil, and such as could not be yielded to without sin; they professed to them, they were not so persuaded, and therefore could not do so. And being then requested to let his ma-

[m] Christian Modest Offer (as they call it,) of the silenced Ministers, in which they call for another disputation. Anno. 1606. [P. 29: "A Christian and Modest Offer of a most indifferent Conference or Disputation, about the maine and principall controversies betwixt the prelats, and the late silenced ministers in England, tendered by some of the said ministers to the archbishops and bishops, and all their adherents: imprinted (Lond.) 1606."

"Master Jacob," says Dr. John Burges, in his Answer quoted above, p. 640, "is thought to be the author of that booke."—Pref. p. 11. Jacob was a Kentish man born, entered a commoner or batler in S. Mary's Hall, Oxford, 1579, aged 16, and became precentor of Ch. Ch. His son Henry Jacob designates him the first independent in England. He had written at first in defence of the church against the Brownists, but adopted congregational principles from Mr. Robinson, at Leyden, which he introduced into this country in 1616. In 1624, he retired to Virginia, where he shortly after died.—Wood. Athen. Oxon. ii. 308. Neal, ii. 44, 92.]

jesty understand, that some of their brethren were further persuaded touching the unlawfulness of those things than themselves, they refused that also." Now I would fain know of this epistler, whether he do not think Dr. Reynolds was one of those most; and whether he do not see that such men as he were ashamed the king should know, that any of the non-conformists (to whom they wished well) were so weak as to call the things in difference simply evil.

N. C. I think you had best dismiss this man. What say you to the arguments in the book itself?

C. Where shall we find them? There are strains of railing rhetoric, ill applied similitudes, (which are the common way of deceiving,) abused scriptures, loose inconsequent reasonings, in a word, no arguments that do not prove a great deal too much.

N. C. Methinks there is something in that, p. 4, that "it is impossible for a man to keep up his heart so much as in a tolerable posture of devotion, reverence, and attention to such prayers, as having been framed by men, and those no more excellent than their neighbours, are grown familiar to us, and can be said by rote beforehand, we having heard them a thousand times already."

C. Nothing at all. For by whom are their prayers framed? Are they angels or glorified saints in the church triumphant, that must not have the name of men? or dare they say the Spirit frames them? And do they not repeat for ever the same phrases, only not put together always in the same order? How many thousand times have you heard them beg that they might prize Christ more, and ordinances more, and sabbaths more, and a number of such like things as these? And besides all this, what say you to the Psalms of David? Could no man anciently join devoutly in singing them, because they were so often repeated, and so well known, that the Jews had them by heart?

N. C. I cannot tell; but "God himself," he saith, (*ibid.*) "judges it necessary to consult his glory, (I mean a religious awe, reverence, and esteem to his counsels and works from men,) by concealing the one and the other, till the time of their bringing forth, that so they may come fresh and new to them." What say you to that?

C. I say he doth not write sense: for it is as if he had told

us, that God doth not reveal his counsels, till he revealed them.

N. C. But you may guess at his meaning; that God keeps secret what he intends to do, till he bring it to pass.

C. That's false. For he foretold many things by the prophets; but were it altogether true, it is nothing to the purpose. For though he surprises us sometimes with events we never thought of, and could not foresee, and will not always let us know what he intends to do; yet he doth not judge it necessary to conceal his will, concerning that which we are to do. No, quite contrary; he judges it necessary to declare it, and hath made no new declarations since the apostles' times; and yet we may have a religious reverence, sure, to his counsels revealed in his word, though they come not fresh and new to us: if we cannot, all that I have to say is, that then the same exception lies against them which you bring against the Common Prayer. Nor are your own prayers so fresh and new as he pretends; but we know beforehand the most you have to say; only you have some new invented words and phrases, which sometimes gives us just disgust.

N. C. Doth not our Saviour say, Matt. xiii. 52, that every scribe, every teacher, instructed to the kingdom of heaven, i. e. meetly qualified for the work of the ministry of the gospel, *is like to a man that brings forth out of his treasures things new and old?*

C. What of all that?

N. C. "Doubtless our Saviour spoke it upon this account," as he tells you.

C. Doubtless he was full of fancy, (as well as the rest of his brethren,) which laid hold of every thing without any reason, if it would but make a show, and serve to countenance their wild opinions; else he would have easily seen that our Lord speaks of his apostles and evangelists, who were furnished with abilities to propagate the gospel, both by their knowledge in the old revelations in the ancient Scriptures, and in the new, which he made unto them.

N. C. But "the liturgy smells rank of the popish mass book,...which alone is sufficient to make it the abhorring of their souls, that understand any thing of the severity of the divine jealousy," &c., p. 5.

C. The old non-conformists were not affrighted with such terrible nothings as these; but told our English Donatists, (the Brownists,) who objected this, that it was more proper to say, the Mass Book was added to our Common Prayer, than that our Common Prayer was taken out of the Mass Book. For most things in our Common Prayer were to be found in the liturgies of our church, long before this Mass Book you talk of was heard of in the world. The mass was patched up by degrees, and added to the liturgies of the Church, now one piece then another; and if a true man may challenge his goods wheresoever he finds them, which the thief hath drawn into his den, then the Church of God may lawfully lay claim to those holy things which the Church of Rome hath usurped, and snatched them away from among the trash wherewith they are mingled. A great deal more to the same purpose you may find in Mr. John Ball[n], which I cannot now stand to tell you. The sum is this; that "popery is a scab or leprosy that cleaves to the church; it mostly stands in erroneous, faulty, gross and abominable superstructures upon the true foundation, whereby they poison or overthrow the foundation itself; but take away the superstructures, and the foundation remains; remove the leprosy, and the man is sound."

N. C. You talk of liturgies in the ancient church; we read of none in the apostles' time.

C. True; but as the same person ingenuously confesses[o], they "might be, though we read nothing of them; for the apostles have not set down a catalogue of all and every particular order that was in the church." However, "a set form of prayer to be used in public meetings is not unlawful, because it is of the number of things which God hath not determined in his word, &c. And as to call that holy, which God hath not commanded, is superstitious; so it is erroneous to condemn that as unholy or profane, which God allows, or is consonant to his word, though not precisely commanded."

N. C. It is a common opinion that the liturgy is a novel invention in the days of blindness and laziness, in favour of idle and debauched priests.

C. You are all as learned as the prefacer to your book.

[n] Answer to two treatises of Mr. John. Can, 1642, part ii. p. 9. [Referred to above, p. 603.]

[o] Ib. part ii. [p. 17.]

But you might be more truly learned if you would read the author now mentioned, who tells you, that though it is hard to determine the precise antiquity of stinted liturgies; yet, that they have been in use in the Christian church for the space of fourteen hundred years, if not above, no man can deny. And that they could not be invented for such ends as you may imagine; because the "chief promoters of stinted liturgies were renowned for their constant and unwearied preaching every day in the week, and sometimes twice[p]." The New-England ministers would have taught you more, for all they dare say against the antiquity of liturgies is, that "for about an hundred years there were none[q]." Then your Dialogue maker[r] tells you they came in, but hath the impudence to add, that ministers then grew idle and weary of taking pains.

N. C. It is a sad thing there should be such endless disputes; surely "if they that composed the Common Prayer had dreamt that it would create so many divisions, distractions, tumults, confusions, &c. they would never have found either heart or hand to lift up toward the promoting of it," p. 8.

C. An admirable argument! As if he had said, the penmen of holy Scripture would never have writ as they have done, if they had but foreseen what ill use would be made of their words, what wranglings and disputes they would raise, and how they would be wrested and tortured to a sense which they never thought of. Must the possibility of an inconvenience that may grow hinder us from doing good things?

N. C. No: but there is no good comes of this. For "they who like this kind of worship are generally ignorant, profane, superstitious, time-servers, fearful, unbelievers, haters of those that are good, drunkards, adulterers," &c.

C. I know he saith so; and repeats it a little after, that they are "generally, if not universally, persons much estranged from the life of God, affectionate lovers of this present world[s]." But we know withal, that there is a vast number of ignorant

[p] Ib. [p. 18.]

[q] Letter of Reply and Answer about nine positions, p. 2. [Published with the Reply of the Ministers of Old-England, by Simeon Ashe, and W. Rathband. See p. 494, above.]

[r] Mr. Hughes, p. 42. ["Certaine Grievances, &c., or a Dialogue betweene a country gentleman and a minister of God's word; by Lewes Hewes." Compare p. 462, above.]

[s] [Ball's Answer, &c. p. 9.]

revilers, railers, liars, false-accusers, covenant-breakers, proud censurers of their brethren, uncharitable, contentious, implacable, self-conceited, greedy scrapers of wealth, &c., who love the other kind of worship, and like no prayers but those of their own conceiving. Doth not this argument "war strongly" (as his phrase is) against such a worship; and "is it not a great presumption of the carnality of it," that it "comports with the humours, fancies, and consciences, of men of such an evil spirit[t]?" If you like not such reasonings against the prayers of your invention, let them alone when you dispute against ours. But I must tell you, however, that this man, let him be who he will, hath committed a most heinous sin, and is presumptuously uncharitable in judging the generality, if not all of us, to be ungodly. We know the contrary, and are assured that there are more than one of a city, or two of a tribe (as he loves to speak) that are truly conscientious, and serve God in this way which he so scorns, with much satisfaction and joy of heart. And all sober men, I think, will look upon it as an intolerable piece of pride in him to say, that it is hardly credible any man fearing God (if there be any such among us) should partake at any time in this worship with any great contentment. This is to measure other men's corn by your own bushel: a piece of the old leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, or if you will, the separatists here in England before he was born; to whom Mr. Gifford answered then as we do now[u]: "It cannot be denied but that many pray fervently with sighs and groans and tears, who read the prayer upon the book, or have it, as we use to say, by heart."

N. C. But if your Prayer-book were as free from blemish as Absalom, nay, if it had been composed by a general council of elect angels; the imposing of it would be imperious blasphemy, and the use of it as imposed, base and wretched idolatry.

C. Go and find some child to fright with your blustering language.

N. C. It is more than noise. For he tells you (p. 11.) that it is as well or as much the incommunicable privilege or prerogative of God to prescribe, appoint, and command his own

[t] [P. 10.]

[u] Answer to Mr. Greenwood, p. 72, &c. 1590. [Appended to his "Plain declaration," &c. quoted above, p. 589.]

worship, as it is to be worshipped. And therefore whosoever shall authoritatively under any penalties command any form, model, method, or manner of divine worship, makes himself God; and whosoever submits to such worship is an idolater, because he gives that honour to a creature which is due to God alone. What have you to say against this argument?

C. I say that as nobody doubts but God, who is above all, hath a right to appoint his own worship, so it is as certain that he hath not appointed any model of worship or form of words to be used in prayer, and none else. Nor hath he told us that he will not be worshipped by a set form, or that we must vary our words and phrases, and conceal what we have to say to him till we bring it forth. And therefore I say he hath left it to our sober and religious reason to determine after what manner that worship which he requires may be best performed. And if not to every man's reason, (which would be absurd,) then those who govern the rest are to consider how Christian societies, when they meet together, may most solemnly pray in the name of our Lord Jesus for such things as are according to God's will; and give thanks also to God the Father through him. And consequently it is no incommunicable prerogative to appoint a form or order of divine worship, since God hath not appointed one himself, and yet must not be worshipped disorderly. And if it may be appointed, then it may be appointed under penalties, to keep men from wanton contempt of the public reason. Mr. J. G., you remember, composed a hymn to be sung on the day of thanksgiving in his congregation. This was a form, and authoritatively imposed; else every one there might have brought forth his hymn and put all into confusion; which if they had done, they might justly have been censured by him, if he had any power. Now I would fain know why the magistrate may not prescribe the song of St. Ambrose, or any other godly hymn, to be sung by all congregations committed to his charge; as well as one minister prescribe an hymn to his particular congregation: and why the magistrate may not use all his power, and punish as he sees cause, as well as such a minister use all his (who could only reprove) in case of contempt. I would know also how this author could excuse the whole Christian world from being idolaters, you presbyterians not excepted, if his doctrine be true. For the parliament pre-

scribed the Directory, and that not without penalties, as a model or manner of divine worship; and so they usurped the place of God, and you who submitted to their orders worshipped the creature, and said constructively and in effect (if he reason right) to the parliament, Thou art my God, or I acknowledge and own thee for my God.

N. C. I remember the words, p. 12.

C. And what would have become of you, if after this dreadful sentence, he had not in an extraordinary fit of good nature revoked it; and allowed the use of a prescribed form? For though he say that conceived prayer, for the nature and kind of it, is that very worship which God commands: yet as he doth not prove it, so he affirms it not confidently without this restriction; at least to those that are, or by the use of means may be capable of it, p. 30. Very kindly said; I perceive this gift then of conceiving prayer is but natural, and no divine inspiration; and where nature is not ready in its conceptions, it may be relieved by the help of art; and some may be incapable of it, whatsoever means they use to acquire this gift. And, consequently, conceived prayer is not the worship which for the nature and kind of it God commands; because he doth not command impossible things, but another manner of worship by a constant form may be used; nay, imposed too, when a magistrate judges it needful, and sees that those who are most zealous for conceived prayers alone, have generally least abilities to conceive aright. In short, he grants, p. 55, that stinted forms of prayer in themselves, unto some men, and under some circumstances, may be lawful; he might as well have said needful, for I suppose he thought them lawful, in case men could not conceive prayers themselves, as they ought. And then why may not the circumstances be such that they may be needful to all; at least at sometimes, when men of the readiest inventions are indisposed? And mark, I beseech you, how timorously he begins to speak after all his vapouring, when he tells us, we shall hardly find in the Scripture, especially in the New Testament, the same prayer used by the same person the second time. It seems we may find it, if we will but take the pains: but to save us a labour he presently remembers, that Christ prayed the same words a second and a third time: which he excuses thus; by the same words we are to understand the

same in sense, matter, and import, but not in sound, letters, or syllables. How he came to know this, I cannot tell; for my part I believe our Saviour was not concerned about new words, when he had the same thing to say again. But the like peremptory conclusion he makes concerning all the exhortations to prayer delivered by Christ or his apostles; which he saith were intended only of that kind of prayer which the saints were to conceive and indict by the help of the Spirit, which they who believed did receive. To countenance this, he cites a great many Scriptures, and tells us that those places (at least the most of them) cannot be understood of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, &c.; which is so notoriously false, that I wonder he had the confidence to affirm it. The first is John vii. 39, the next Acts v. 32, which no man, I think, before him ever understood otherwise than of the extraordinary gifts bestowed on the day of Pentecost. And of such gifts the apostle speaks in the Rom. v. 5. 2 Cor. v. 5. Gal. iii. 2. Ephes. i. 13. In short, there is but one place of all that he musters up, that can with any colour be drawn to serve his purpose, viz. Rom. viii. 14, 15. And yet to me there is no sense so plain of those words as this; that all the gifts of the Holy Ghost being a great evidence of the truth of Christianity, they that lived accordingly might be assured of the love of God, and whether they were Jews or Gentiles might call God Father, though they observed not the law of Moses. But I most marvel that he should allege that place in 1 John ii. 27, which the Brownists, I remember, were wont to cite (and with more show of reason) to prove that every saint had the holy Spirit to open to them, and lead them into every truth. To which, if you please, you shall hear what the old non-conformists replied.

N. C. I had rather hear what you can reply to the Scriptures which he brings to prove that therefore God abominates a worship, or a form and manner of worship, because he hath not commanded it. Though the worship were in its own nature abominable, yet he takes no notice of that; but only of its not being commanded, which is a sign the provocation lies there. Jer. vii. 31. xix. 5, &c. pages 19, 20.

C. I remember the places very well; and remember withal that this is a miserable old argument which hath been answered

many a time before he set pen to paper. And it hath been proved with plain evidence, that the meaning of the words, *which I commanded not*, is as much as, *which I forbad:* as he had expressly their offering their children to Molock, of which he speaks in that Jer. vii. 31. So when it is said that they offered *strange fire which the Lord commanded not*, Lev. x. 1, all conclude that less is said and more understood, viz. that the Lord hath forbidden it. Mr. Ainsworth himself cannot deny it, who yet makes the same use of this phrase sometimes that this author doth. And indeed a man must flatly contradict all reason that opposes this. For when he speaks of those that should worship other gods, sun and moon, which he had not commanded, Deut. xvii. 3, it is senseless to interpret it otherwise than this; 'which he had forbidden.' For if this was the reason why a man sinned in worshipping the moon, that he did it without God's leave or command; it would suppose that God might have commanded them to worship it, and serve other gods: which nobody imagines. All those places therefore, which he alleges to prove that God's not commanding a thing is enough to make it unlawful, amount to no more but this, that his forbidding a thing makes it unlawful.

N. C. But we ought to interpret the Scripture according to the very form of the words; and so, that is unlawful which is not commanded.

C. Just now you were only for the sense and the matter, not the words and syllables. But to let that pass; I have shown you this is a fashion of speech in the Old Testament for a thing forbidden. And besides, the absurdity of your interpretation is so great, that the wiser sort of that party who first used this argument were forced afterwards to forsake it; as I can clearly demonstrate out of Mr. Cartwright. And indeed where hath the Lord commanded a minister to read a text and gloss upon it; or the congregation to sing Psalms of David in metre? Mr. Smith can never be answered by these disputers, who said that the holy Scriptures were not to be retained as helps before the eyes in time of worship; and that it was unlawful to look upon a book in singing psalms. Nor could they have told what to say to that poor gentleman in Warwickshire, who was so deeply possessed with these two fancies, "that we must not communicate with sinners; nor use

any human inventions in God's service:" that to avoid the first he shut up himself and children in his house, having no meat but what was put in at the window; nor suffering any body to come near them when they all lay sick in great misery: and to avoid the last, he cut out the contents, and the titles of every thing in the Bible, leaving nothing but the text itself[x].

N. C. Doth not God say, *Thou shalt neither add thereto nor diminish from it?* Deut. xii. 32.

C. What? not add contents or notes for the better understanding of the Bible?

N. C. Nothing to the worship of God; of which his own word is to be the only rule, and not the least tittle to be devised of our own.

C. Why do you only say 'to his worship?' You learnt this of Mr. Ainsworth, the old separatist, who most unjustly restrains those words of God's service: whereas Moses speaks of every thing he had received from him, whether they were *statutes* or *judgments;* as you may see, ver. 1: in one word, of the whole law, which was to direct them not only in religious but civil affairs[y]. And therefore this place is as effectual to prove that there may be no law made to determine our civil controversies, as that there may be none made to order God's worship and service. And then what hinders but those men may obtain their desires, who told you lately it will never be well till the laws of the Lord Jesus be received alone? that all our counsellors and pleaders bring their books of common law, and bestow them as the students of curious arts did theirs in the apostles' time? that the godly send out their writs to supersede all proceedings in Westminster Hall, and judge all things in their churches?

N. C. The state will never suffer that folly.

C. Nor this foolish interpretation of Scripture, I hope. The Jews, I am sure, (from whom Mr. Ainsworth borrows so many useful expositions,) never thought that no particular laws might be made agreeable to the general, and for the preservation and better execution of them. For the elders made many; and

[x] [By name M. Edward Greswold.] Mr. Ball, Answer to Can. [p. 138.]

[y] Read Deut. iv. 1, 2. where he begins his exhortation to observe his laws; requiring them not to add or diminish from any of them.

imposed those commandments on the people as a hedge and security to the divine laws: and in this they did well. All the fault was, that in process of time they grew too numerous, and they equalled the decrees of the elders with the very word of God, nay, sometimes made the law void by them.

N. C. Since you say you are in haste to be gone, I will trouble you no farther about this book; though there are many things behind that deserve consideration.

C. I am not of that mind. He hath but raked together all the frivolous exceptions, with the filthy scoffs and jeers which were answered in the days of our forefathers: and are as easy to confute as to tell to twenty. But let me tell you this before we part with him, that Mr. J. Goodwin was not wont to allow reasons drawn from the Jewish law, (though all the lofty rhetoric in this book be drawn from it,) because the state of things now is not like what was then. He tells us, for instance, in his *Hagiomastix*[z], though blasphemers, seducers to idolatry, and false prophets were put to death by that law, yet we have not the same reason to do so now; because they might immediately consult with God in all difficult cases that happened about matters of religion; but we have no such infallible directions in all cases, and cannot have disputes so ended. If this reasoning be good, then this is, I am sure.—God directed every thing about their sacrifices in the Jewish law, and therefore no rite or ceremony was to be added by them, because if any more were needful they might still repair to him. But he hath not done so under the gospel, nor do we know to what prophet or oracle to go for direction in every thing; and therefore we must repair to religious prudence and discretion.

N. C. I marvel he should speak with so much confidence and triumph in a matter that is so disputable.

C. It was the manner and the custom of the man, (if Mr. J. G. were the author,) as you may be satisfied if you look into his Anticavalierisme, where he tells you, "There is no occasion

[z] ["Hagiomastix, or the Scourge of the Saints displayed in his colours of ignorance and blood: or a vindication of some printed queries published some moneths since by authority, in way of answer to certaine Antipapers of Syllogismes, entituled a Vindication of a printed paper, &c. by John Goodwin, Pastor of a church of Christ in Coleman Street," —4to, 1646. See § 36. p. 46.]

for a man to make a stand in matter of conscience," whether he should engage on the parliament's side or no: "nothing to detain one's conscience in suspense;" "the righteousness of the cause being as clear as the light, or as the sun at noon-day[a]." And to grace the business with Scripture language, he tells you, "the cause is like the law of God itself in these excellent qualifications of it; that it is *holy, just, and good*[b]."

N. C. I never knew any man speak with such assurance, in a thing which all wise men thought at least doubtful.

C. Well, I put you in mind of it then, that you may not either wonder or be staggered when you hear men speak with such assurance. For he uses as big and confident words in another case, in which I am sure you are as confident of the contrary, viz. about the putting our late sovereign to death. "This conclusion," saith he, "stands like a great mountain, immovable; that the justice and honour of the sentence against the late king are no way impairable by this supposition, that this present parliament is not completely-legal parliament[c]." And in another place; "Doubtless never was there any person under heaven sentenced with death upon more equitable or just grounds in respect of guilt or demerit[d]." Thus he boasts also, that he hath brought this conclusion, "that there was a necessity lying on the army" to seclude many members, "into as clear and perfect light as any the sun shineth at noon-day[f]."

N. C. At midnight, he should have said.

[a] ["Anti-Cavalierisme, or truth pleading as well on the necessity as the lawfulnesse of the present warre," &c. by Jo. Goodwin, 4to, Lond. 1642. See p. 4.]

[b] [P. 3.]

[c] Defence of the sentence passed on the king, p. 47. ["Υβριστοδίκαι. "The Obstructours of Justice, or a defence of the honourable sentence passed upon the late king by the High Court of Justice, opposed chiefly to the serious and faithfull representation and vindication of some of the ministers of London: as also to the Humble Addresse of Dr. Hammond, to his excellencie, and councel of Warre, &c. together with a brief Reply to Mr. John Geree's book, intituled Might overcoming right: wherein the act of the armie in garbling the Parliament is further cleared, as also some further reckonings between the said Dr. Hammond and the authour made straight:" by John Goodwin, 4to, Lond. 1649.]

[d] [Sect. 85. p. 90.] Ib. repeated again, p. 95. "Without all controversy, there never was in any age through the whole world a sentence more just," &c. [sect. 89.]

[f] Reply to Mr. Geree's Might overcoming Right, p. 130. [Appended to the same treatise.]

C. No; let him say at noon-day. They are but words of course; every thing, though never so dark, is to him as clear as the noon-day. And therefore no wonder it be so clear to him that we are all idolaters; and that the king in imposing the Common Prayer hath equalled himself unto God, and obtruded himself as God, to be worshipped by us as Nebuchadnezzar's golden image was. For he told us, you know, in express words, "that whosoever shall authoritatively and under a penalty command any model, method, or manner of divine worship to be observed by men, makes himself God," &c. You may read it at large, p. 11, 12, for it is as clear as the sun.

N. C. That such books ought to be burnt.

C. I must add that you are all guilty of too much confidence, and talk as if you were infallible in your conclusions. When you see therefore the folly of it in another, mend it in yourselves. And do not talk hereafter as if all godly men had ever been of your mind: no man of a tender conscience but held it unlawful to prescribe any thing in God's worship. Every body knows Cartwright, Reynolds, Greenham, were of this opinion, as the prefacer boldly told you; and it is a wonder he did not add Dr. Sibbs. For so some of your party took care the world should believe; and chose rather to corrupt his writings, than have it thought he was of another persuasion.

N. C. I shall never believe it.

C. You may choose; but I shall prove that this good man's writings were abused presently after his death in this very point. For in his book called the Soul's Conflict, he gave this direction among others to guide a soul in doubtful cases. "The laws under which we live are particular determinations of the law of God; and therefore ought to be a rule to us so far as they reach. Though it be too narrow a rule to be good only so far as man's law guides unto, yet law being the joint reason and consent of many men for public good, hath an use for the guiding of our actions that are under the same. Where it dashes not against God's law, what is agreeable to law is agreeable to conscience." Thus the rule stood when the book first came out[g]. But in a very short time after, when he was newly laid in his grave, the first words were changed into these; "The laws under which we live are particular deter-

[g] First edition 1635, p. 364.

minations of the law of God, in some duties of the second table[h]." In which they made two restrictions of that which he had said in general words; first, they restrained the rule to the second table, and not to all things neither, but only some duties. And then they add a whole sentence by way of example, which was not in the first edition: which I make no doubt was done on purpose, lest any man who read the book should think it was the doctor's opinion, that we should conform to the orders of our governors about the worship of God, where the law of God hath determined nothing in particular, and their laws do not cross his. But what is there done by the Jesuits worse than this? what greater injury to the dead than thus to play tricks with their books, and change their words at your pleasure?

N. C. It is very strange.

C. I have something more to tell you. As they have added here, so they have taken away in another place just before it. He is answering, I told you, this question, What course must we take for guidance of our lives in particular actions, wherein doubts may arise what is most agreeable to God's will? And one advice is this; "We must look to our place wherein God hath set us. If we be in subjection to others, their authority in doubtful things ought to sway with us." A dangerous rule, some men thought; and therefore in the next edition they left out those words, "in doubtful things." And also blotted out this whole sentence which follows: "It is certain we ought to obey, (viz. in doubtful things of which he is speaking,) and if the things wherein we are to obey be uncertain to us, we ought to leave that which is uncertain, and stick to that which is certain: in this case we must obey those that are God's under God."

N.C. Are you sure of this?

C. As sure as that I see you: though I must tell you there was a neat device to hide this fraud; for they reprinted the book speedily with the very same title-page that was before, without giving notice that it was a second edition: and by leaving out those lines, and adding an example, as I told you, to illustrate the rule as they had restrained it, they made the

[h] [Chap. 17. p. 288 of the edition published after the author's death in the same year, but distinct from that issued as the 'second edition.']

pages exactly even as they were at the first[h]. Afterward the book was divided into chapters; and in all editions since, you will find these rules, (chap. 17,) with these alterations.

N. C. By his own appointment, it is like.

C. Why did they not tell us so?

N. C. I know not.

C. I will tell you then; they were loath to tell a plain lie: for the doctor died within three days after he had writ his preface to the first impression, and therefore it is most likely made no alterations. That preface was dated July the first, 1635[i], and he died July the fourth. So I gather from those who put out his two last sermons, preached June 21st and 28th, and he died, say they, the Lord's day following. Immediately after which came out a new impression of the same year 1635, but not called a second edition: which they would have us believe was not till 1636. A mere cheat as I confidently affirm, having seen and compared all.

N. C. I see now you are of an imposing spirit; and have taken a great deal of pains to show it.

C. What? Am I for imposing on men those words they never said?

N. C. Be not so perverse. All the reformed churches are against imposing of set forms, as I have been told.

C. As perverse as I am, I will follow you for once. So you have been told, I believe, that they are against all set forms though not imposed; I am sure I have.

N. C. No, I remember in the beginning of the late wars the Scottish forms of prayer were printed[k].

[h] There are two editions of 1635, one of his own, another of somebody's else; but so ordered that they seem the same. At least they reprinted that sheet (wherein these things are contained) with these alterations, which I add, lest I should not be rightly understood by all. [The 'second edition' was also put forth in the same year.]

[i] [The day of the month is not appended to the preface in the first unaltered edition, a copy of which is in the Bodleian library.]

[k] [The publication here alluded to, as the author explains more at length in the third part of the present work, is "The Service, Discipline, and Forme of the Common-Prayers, and Administration of the Sacraments, used in the English church of Geneva. As it was approved by that most reverend divine, Mr. John Calvin, and the church of Scotland. Humbly presented to the most high court of parliament, this present yeare, 1641. London, 4to, printed for William Cooke, at Furnifalls Inne, 1641." Two years later a second edition

C. And so were the French[l], and those of Geneva[m], and

was put forth, with the title of "The Reformation of the Discipline and Service of the Church, according to the best Reformed Churches. With the Forme of the Common-Prayers, and administration of the Sacraments, used in the English church of Geneva. As it was approved by the most reverend divines of the church of Scotland. With the manner of their election of pastors and ministers, and touching the office of elders. Humbly presented to the high court of parliament. 1 Tim. v. 17. *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.* London: printed for Matthew Walbanck, and Lawrence Chapman, 1643."

The same work was a third time printed in the Phœnix, (vol. ii. p. 204—259. 8vo. Lond. 1708.)—"Calvin's Common-Prayer Book; or the Service, Discipline, and Form of the Common Prayers, and administration of the Sacraments, used in the English church of Geneva, as it was approved by that most reverend divine Mr. John Calvin, and the church of Scotland."

This compilation is mostly identical with that commonly known as the Book of Common Order, adapted by Knox, Whittingham, Parry, and Lever, from the Genevan model of Calvin, with the addition of "some part taken forth of the English book (of Common Prayer), and other things put in as the state of the church required." (Troubles at Frankfort, in the Phœnix, p. 71.) This was printed at Geneva, with a preface dated Feb. 10, 1556, and seems to have been carried back by Knox to Scotland, where it was enacted by the General Assembly to be universally observed in December 1562.

Several instances are on record to illustrate the fact of its having been in general use from the year 1564, (M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 425; Friendly Debate, part 3.) Its design was not to restrict the minister to the literal use of the prayers therein contained, but to furnish a general model, and allow a certain latitude to extemporary effusions. Gradually the latter usage gained so far the ascendancy in practice, that the observance of the prescribed forms became virtually extinct.]

[l] [It does not appear what authority Patrick had for asserting the existence of English translations of the liturgical forms in use among the foreign reformed churches, as distinct from the adaptations of the common Genevan service. It is true that the "Book of Discipline of the reformed churches of France" was put forth in English in the year 1642, which included certain offices of the church, as those for baptism, burial, and excommunication; but no such version of the entire French Liturgy seems to have been current for the next thirty years. In the Lambeth Library is a small octavo volume printed in London in 1699, entitled "Forms of Prayer used in the reformed churches in France before their persecution and destruction;" translated into English by J. T.: the authenticity and correctness of which are certified by the signatures of several pastors of French congregations in and about London. The translator explains in the preface that "this or the same form is in use in all the reformed churches throughout Holland, Hungary, Brandenburg, and in other parts of Germany, Switzerland and Piedmont." It follows generally Calvin's form of service, but in a very condensed shape.]

[m] [An English version of Calvin's Genevan Order (on which the

Guernsea[n], and the Dutch[o], to name no more; all translated

several forms adopted by the reformed communities were generally based) was in existence as early as the year 1554. (Troubles at Frankfort, in the Phœnix, ii. 63. Mc Crie's Life of Knox, p. 425,) and in use among the English exiles at Frankfort and Geneva. In the same year a Latin translation of that form was put forth in the former city, with a preface dated Sept. 1. (Mc Crie, ibid.) On the arrival of Knox at Frankfort, he together with Whittingham, Gilby, Foxe, and Cole, received a commission to draw up a new frame of service, in which they adhered closely to the Genevan model. Exception being taken to this, by the favourers of the English book of Common-Prayer, headed by Dr. Cox, another commission was given to Knox, Whittingham, Parry and Lever, to devise a new Order, which they effected by the addition of certain portions of the church of England ritual. This was adopted under the sanction of Calvin, Musculus, Peter Martyr, Bullinger and Viret, Feb. 6, 1555, and was printed with a preface bearing date Feb. 10, 1556.

An edition was printed in London by Waldegrave in 1584, which, being prohibited by order of the Star-chamber in June 1585, was reproduced by Richard Schilders in 1586 at Middleburgh in Zealand, where a company of English merchants resided under the ministry of Cartwright. A third appeared at the same place in 1587, and a fourth in 1602. This book the Puritan party presented to parliament in the year 1584, and made strenuous efforts to obtain that legal confirmation of it in England which it had in Scotland, combined with a new platform of church-government and discipline, framed on the Genevan type by Travers, and translated into English by Cartwright. The variations of these several versions are exhibited in vols i and iii of Reliquiæ Liturgicæ by the Rev. Peter Hall, M. A.]

[n] [During the reign of Edward VI. the newly compiled liturgy of the church of England was established in the island of Guernsey, in a French translation. The accession of Mary restored for a time the use of the Romish forms. Under Elizabeth the immigration of a large number of protestant refugees from France led to the formation of congregations on the Genevan or Calvinistic model, in which they had been brought up. One of these Hugonot societies taking possession of the parish church of St. Helier's, where the Sieur de la Ripaudière preached and administered the sacraments after the usage of the Geneva rites, soon gained so much ground, that they were emboldened to petition the queen that the whole of the churches in the island might be brought under that discipline. This application was unsuccessful, but gradually the greater part of the island adopted the new method, and the English service-book was generally laid aside. The puritans in England, to improve this opportunity, sent over Cartwright and Snape, who procured a synod of the ministers and elders of the several Channel islands to be held at the town of S. Peter's-port, in Guernsey, June 28, 1576. A form of classical discipline was there drawn up in twenty chapters, with the title of "The Orders for Ecclesiastical Discipline, according to that which hath been practised since the reformation of the church in his majesties dominions of the Iles of Garnsey, Gersey, Spark and Alderny: confirmed by the authoritie of the synode of the aforesaid iles."

into English. Therefore pray satisfy some of your ignorant though confident friends in this matter. As for that of impo-

This form was ratified by a second synod in October, 1597, and the use of it sanctioned by the local government.

A petition was presented from the islands to James I. shortly after his accession to the throne, praying him to confer the force of law upon the settlement thus made, on the fraudulent plea that the puritan platform had received the sanction of Elizabeth: yielding to which, James was pleased to grant letters patent under the privy seal, Aug. 8, 1603, guaranteeing the free use of the rites, worship, and government of the reformed churches 'as in force in the duchy of Normandy.'

Not long after this however, at the instigation of Bancroft, Sir John Peyton, a zealous churchman, was appointed governor, specially commissioned to root out the Genevan and reinstate the Anglican ritual and ceremonies. In Jersey the obsolete office of dean was revived, and a body of special canons drawn up for his direction by the bishop of Winchester, the diocesan of the Channel islands; under the operation of which the privileges of the presbyterians were extinguished, and the order of the church of England reinstated. During the brief period of the civil war and protectorate, the puritan platform was revived for a time; and a new impression of the Book of Discipline above named appeared in 1642, which is probably that here alluded to by Patrick. It does not however comprise the entire Liturgy, but merely the special office for the ordination of elders and deacons.

Heylin, who printed the same work in his Survey of the Isles of Guernsey and Jersey, makes the following remarks upon the article concerning the 'Liturgie of the church' &c.—"The publick prayers here intended are those which the minister conceives according to the present occasion: beginning with a short confession, and so descending to crave the assistance of God's Spirit in the exercise, or sermon then in hand. For the forme, the Geneva Psalter telleth us that it shall be left *à la discretion du ministre*, 'to the minister's discretion;' the form of prayers, and of marriage, and of administration of the sacraments, there put down, being types only and examples, whereby the minister may be directed in the general."—Two Journeys into France, &c. p. 369.]

[o] [The original conception of the liturgical books of the reformed church of the Netherlands seems to be found in an old liturgy composed for the use of his congregation at Strasburg by the presiding elder Valerandus Polanus. This was printed in Latin, with the title "Liturgia Sacra Peregrinorum profugorum Argentinæ," &c.—8vo, Lond. 1551. There existed very early after the reformation a congregation of Dutch and Flemish refugees in London, who, during the reign of Edward VI. obtained royal letters patent under the privy seal, dated July 4, 1550, establishing them in possession of the conventual church, or Templum Jesu, in Austin Friars, thenceforth and to the present time known as the Dutch Church; with permission to enjoy their own proper and national rites, ceremonies, liturgy and discipline. A special form of service was at the same time adapted for their use from that of Polanus by John Alasco their first superintendent, printed in Latin, Lond. Sept. 6, 1555. This had been previously published in a Dutch translation by J. Utenhove

sing, what think you of these words of Mr. Calvin, in his letter to the Protector, October 22, 1548. "As for forms of prayer and rites ecclesiastical, I do greatly approve that there be a certain one extant, from which it shall not be lawful for the ministers in their function to depart[p]," &c. For which he there gives solid reasons. And whatsoever is pretended to the contrary, the reformed churches do follow this counsel, and tie men to a form in the public duties of God's worship, as I can evidently show. But now let me only observe, that heretofore your ministers thought it no light argument against the Separatists, that all reformed churches acknowledged the Church of England as their sister; and consequently did not think her wicked for imposing forms of prayer. So you may read in the book I told you of before, published by Mr. Rathband, p. 6, though the truth is, those ministers have taken that argument out of a book of Mr. Bernard's[q], who speaks discreetly when he saith, that though we "do not make this our only or chief defence, whereby we seek to approve ourselves to God, or the consciences of his people;" yet it is a thing that gives some reputation to us. For even "Saint Paul, who received not his calling either from or by men, alleges for the credit of his ministry, that three chief apostles approved him and gave him the right hand of fellowship... And, which is more, he seeks to win commendation and credit even to those orders which he by his apostolical authority might have established, by the example and judgment of other churches[r]."

N. C. Then you are for imposing.

C. I am for that which all men of any discretion think necessary, viz. that every body should not be left to do according to

in 1550, and an abridgment by M. Mikron in 1554, again revised in 1560; also in German by J. Mayer, 8vo, Heid. 1565, and in French by Giles Clematius, 8vo, 1556. n. p. But no trace of an English version is to be met with. Alasco's liturgy remained in general use, until, by the enactment of the synod of Dort, a revised form of worship was uniformly adopted both by the Dutch churches in this country, and throughout the Netherlands.]

[p] ["Ratio autem expedita ad eam rem una est, si exstet nempe summa quædam doctrinæ ab omnibus recepta, quam inter prædicandum sequantur omnes; ad quam etiam observandam omnes episcopi et parochi jurejurando adstringantur, ut nemo ad munus ecclesiasticum admittatur, nisi spondeat sibi illum doctrinæ consensum inviolatum futurum."—Calvin. Epist. p. 41.]

[q] Errors of Barrow and Greenhood confuted, 1608. p. 178. [Quoted above, p. 628.]

[r] For which he cites 1 Cor. vii. 17. xi. 15. xiv. 33. xvi. 1.

their present humour and fancy, when they come to worship God in the public assemblies. Even the famous Smectymnuus allowed impositions in some cases. For they propound this as an expedient, that, "if it shall appear any minister proves insufficient to discharge the duty of prayer in a conceived way, it may be imposed on him as a punishment to use a set form and no other[s]." This was indeed a contrivance to disgrace the

[s] Answer to the Humble Remonstrance, p. 14. [This celebrated controversy originated in the publication during the year 1640 of a short treatise in defence of the liturgy and diocesan episcopacy, entitled "An Humble Remonstrance to the high court of parliament, by a dutifull sonne of the church: London, (4to,) printed for Nathaniel Butter in Paul's churchyard at the pyde-Bull near St. Austin's gate." It bore no author's name, but was soon understood to be the production of Joseph Hall, bishop of Norwich, (Works, vol. x. p. 273—286.) who had previously at the request of archbishop Laud published a work of a similar kind, "Episcopacy of divine right," &c. (Works, vol. x. p. 145—271.) The bishop's Remonstrance called forth in the following year "An Answer to a booke entituled An Humble Remonstrance; in which the original of Liturgy and Episcopacy is discussed, and quæres propounded concerning both. The parity of Bishops and Presbyters in Scripture demonstrated; the occasion of their imparity in antiquity discovered; the disparity of the ancient and our moderne bishops manifested, the antiquity of ruling elders in the church vindicated, the prelatical church bownded. Written by SMECTYMNVVS."—4to, Lond. 1641.

The clue to this fanciful pseudonym seems to have remained undiscovered by bishop Hall throughout the entire controversy that ensued; nor does the secret appear to have been publicly divulged, until John Saltmarsh, a presbyterian divine, furnished the explanation, in a pamphlet styled "Groanes for liberty," that the word was made up of the initial letters of the authors' names. "If you are ignorant who this Smectymnuus is, S-tephen M-arshall, E-dmund C-alamy, T-homas Y-oung, M-atthew N-ewcomen, VV-illiam S-purstow, can tell you," —4to, Lond. 1646.

To this attack, which was sustained with considerable learning and closeness of argument, and perhaps has never been surpassed as a succinct and logical exposition of the grounds, scriptural and patristic, of the presbyterian system, the bishop rejoined in "A Defence of the Humble Remonstrance, against the frivolous and false exceptions of Smectymnuus, wherein the right of Liturgy and Episcopacy is clearly vindicated from the vain cavils and challenges of the answerers;" to which he appended a translation of some passages in the commentaries of Abraham Scultetus, professor at Heidelberg, on St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus, in which that divine had expressed his opinions on the subject of the divine right of episcopacy. (Halls' works, vol. x. pp. 287, 369.)

The same authors having put forth in reply, "A Vindication of the Answer to the Humble Remonstrance, from the unjust imputations of frivolousnesse and falsehood: wherein the cause of Liturgy and Episcopacy is further debated; by the same SMECTYMNVVS:"—the bishop closed the controversy in the same year with "A Short An-

Liturgy, as if it were fit for nobody's use but the duller and heavier sort of people: but yet it shows their judgment about imposing, which you now complain of. And I would fain know what they would have done with such insufficient persons as had a good opinion of their gifts; and thinking themselves wronged in being condemned to the forenamed penance, would not obey them. Would they have forced them to obedience or no? If not, their expedient signified nothing; if they would, then why should not the magistrate do it now, who knows that most of those who love liberty have a better opinion of their own abilities than they ought?

N. C. We wish the Common Prayer was left at liberty to be used or not, as men found themselves inclined.

C. Do you so? That is because you despise it, and think it good for little or nothing. But were there one of your own inventions to be established, you would never leave us at liberty, if you had power, to make use of it, or let it alone. Nothing should stand in competition with it: but every thing else as well as Common Prayer fall before it, as Dagon before the ark. Did not the Independents incur your displeasure, for craving an allowance to order a few churches after their own fashion? Mr. Dury himself, I remember, a man of peace and composer of differences, resolved their way was not to be tolerated. For "it would lay," said he[t], "the foundation of strife

swer to the tedious Vindication of Smectymnuus."

Among other disputants Milton engaged in controversy with the bishop, in "Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's defence against Smectymnuus," published in 1641, and "An Apology for Smectymnuus," in 1642.—Prose Works, vol. iii. pp. 42—168.]

[t] Epistolary Discourse, p. 21. Licensed by Mr. Cranford, July 27, 1644. ["An Epistolary Discourse, wherein (amongst other particulars) these following questions are briefly resolved:

1. Whether or no the state should tolerate the independent government?
2. If they should tolerate it, how farre, and with what limitations?
3. If they should not tolerate it, what course should be taken to bring them to a conformity with the Presbyterials?

Written by Mr. John Dury to { Mr. Thomas Goodwin. Mr. Philip Nye. Mr. Samuel Hartlib.

Published by a friend for more common use."—4to, Lond. 1644.

John Dury, a Scottish divine, long resident in Germany, and subsequently ordained by bishop Hall to the ministry of the church of England, made himself conspicuous for his long sustained exertions towards effecting the union of the several protestant communities; and in the first instance of the Lutheran and Calvinistic bodies on the continent. His plan of such an union was promulgated in 1634, in which year he

and division in the kingdom to have two ways of church-government; which may agree with some Machiavilian, but no Christian policy." And therefore it will be no wisdom in the state to yield to the suit of the five brethren, "except it be induced thereunto by the necessity of avoiding some greater inconvenience, than is the admitting of a seed of perpetual division within itself, which is in my apprehension the greatest of all other, and most opposite to the kingdom of Christ. Now the less the cause of separation is, the greater is the fault in those that make it, and the less cause the state hath to give way to the making of it." You remember therefore what ordinances were made for the electing of elders; and that "all parishes and places whatsoever, as well privileged and exempt jurisdictions as others, should be brought under the goverment of congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies[u]." And this was according to their solemn promise of settling uniformity; "which part of the Covenant," they said, (if you will believe them,) "was always before their eyes[x]." In pursuance

personally advocated his views at the general assembly of the Lutherans at Frankfort. Among other divines of eminence, he obtained the cordial approval and encouragement of Joseph Mede, and Baxter, who seconded his scheme in a letter specially drawn up in Latin and English for his benefit with the protestants abroad; as well as of the most eminent ministers of the congregations in New England. Dury was one of the extra members superadded to the Assembly of divines, with whom he took the covenant. He is said to have afterwards joined the Independents, and to have taken the engagement and all other oaths that followed up to the Restoration. Whether he conformed or not at that period seems uncertain, but he does not appear to have been ejected, and more probably was led to discontinue his stated ministerial exercises for the prosecution of his favourite scheme. The moderation of his own views, together with his fundamental principle of comprehension, is conspicuous in the present extract.]

[u] Ordination of 19 Aug. 1645. ["Directions of the Lords and Commons assembled in parliament, after advice had with the Assembly of divines, for the electing and choosing of Ruling-Elders, in all the congregations, and in the classicall assemblies for the cities of London and Westminster, and the severall counties of the kingdom, for the speedy settling of the presbyterial-government:"—ordered to be printed, die Martii, 19 Aug. 1645. Art. 5. p. 3.]

[x] Ordin. 14. Mar. 1645. [P. 3 of "An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in parliament for keeping of scandalous persons from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the enabling of congregations for the choice of elders, and supplying of defects in some former ordinances, and directions of parliament," ordered to be printed die Sabbathi 14 Martii, 1645 (164$\frac{5}{6}$).]

of which also the city desired[y] "that some strict and speedy course might be taken for the suppressing of all private and separated congregations:" and the house of Lords ordered the printing of their petition, which was grounded upon a Remonstrance[z] of the house of Commons, wherein they "declared that it was far from their purpose or desire to let loose the golden reins of discipline and government in the church, or to leave private persons or particular congregations to take up what form of divine service they please." As for the sacred Covenant, that "holy ordinance", (as Mr. Case calls it[a],) and

[y] Humble Remonstrance and Petition, May 26, 1646. ["To the Right honourable the Lords assembled in high court of parliament: the humble Remonstrance and Petition of the Lord Major, Aldermen, and Commons of the Citie of London in common councell assembled, together with their Lordships answer thereunto. London, printed by Richard Cotes, for John Bellamie."—4to, Lond. 1646. Art. i. p. 7. Lords' Journals, Dec. 19. p. 500. The same petition is alluded to above, p. 451.]

[z] Decemb. 15, 1642. [A misprint, repeated in all the editions, for 1641. Shortly after the first meeting of the long parliament, a committee of the house of Commons had been appointed to prepare and draw up a general Remonstrance of the state of the kingdom, and the particular grievances it had sustained; but had taken no active steps until after the recess in the autumn of 1641, when during the king's absence in Scotland it was revived on the motion of Mr. Strode, and presented the draught of a report about the time of his return to London; setting forth the grievances of the country in church and state under numerous heads. This having been fiercely discussed in a committee of the whole house, which continued sitting from nine in the morning till after midnight, Nov. 22, was carried by a majority of 159 to 148. How momentous this result was felt to be at the time, appears from the declaration made by Cromwell to Falkland, on leaving the house at two o'clock in the morning, that "if the Remonstrance had been rejected, he would have sold all he had the next morning, and never have seen England more: and he knew there were many other honest men of the same resolution." —Clarendon, p. 125.

The Remonstrance was presented to the king at Hampton Court, Dec. 1, together with a petition from the house in its support. Both documents were printed and published together on the 15th of that month, contrary to his majesty's express injunction that they should not appear until he had returned his reply. In the ensuing month he published an Answer to the petition, and a Declaration against the Remonstrance; in which he expressed his willingness to remove all scandals, could they be proved to exist, and at the same time to uphold the constitution of the country. The whole of these papers are given at length in king Charles' Works, vol. ii. pp. 55—60; Nalson, ii. 692—750: Rushworth, iv. 436—451; Parl. Hist. ii. 943—977; Rapin, ii. 388—399; and a concise summary of the transaction by Clarendon, 126—130.]

[a] [See p. 527, above.]

choice piece of divine service, you know no man could be a minister or an elder, no, nor practise as an attorney or solicitor at the law, unless he took it: and the refusal of it was generally made a mark of ungodliness, as I will prove when you please.

N. C. I know not what reasons they went by then.

C. The same whereby they would proceed now, if they had the same power and the same hopes. And so I believe would the Independents too; who are for imposing their own things as much as they are able. For they have invented, you must know, a model and form of their own heads which is not appointed in holy Scriptures. As first, that the members must be examined and give an account of the manner of their conversion, (which is in a certain method and form too in New England,) and that before the church[b]. Then it is required that they enter into a church covenant, which is not the covenant of grace, but distinct from it: (for they acknowledge a man may be within the covenant of grace who is not in this, and one may be in this who is not in that.) And yet it is a sacred, not a civil thing, which must be made public before all the church, vocal and express; so binding, that none can be loosed from it without the consent of the church. And then it is held (at least by many) that the members must prophesy, i. e. exercise their gifts in and before the whole congregation, by preaching, expounding, applying the Scripture: by instruction, confutation, reprehension with all authority[c]. Now

[b] Narration of some Church Courses in New England, by W[illiam] R[athband], collected out of their own reports, &c., chap. iv. p. 16. [An answer to Rathband's work was published in 1644, by Thomas Welde, the compiler of the "Short Story of the rise and progress of the familists in New England," &c. (See p. 558 above.) In this he undertakes to prove,

1. "That the grounds of his Narration are sandie and insufficient.

2. That the manner of his handling it unloving and irregular.

3. That the matter of it full of gross mistakes and divers contradictions.

4. That the quotations extremely wrested and out of measure abused.

5. That his marginall notes impertinent and injurious."]

[c] Which they say is an ordinance perpetual in the church, as we read in Mr. Cotton's Catechism. [Quoted with other references to the tenets of the New England Separatists in Rathband's work, chap. xiii. p. 46. By Cott. Cat. he informs the reader in the preface, he means to indicate Cotton's "Treatise of Church Constitution, by way of question and answer."

The title of the last named work is;

having devised these things, to name no more, I observe that the covenant in the same church is in one and the same form of words as well as matter; and therefore put into writing, and must be read by the party to be admitted, or he must hear it read by some other, and give his assent to it. Here is not only a form of holy covenant, (a principal point of worship, as W. R. notes,) invented by one or more men, but imposed upon others, even as many as enter into the church; and more than that, to be read upon a book. What is this better, or how is it more lawful than a set form of prayer? especially since this covenant is imposed as an ordinance of God, and absolutely necessary; so as no book prayer I think is. I find also that by this covenant, the members in some places[d] were restrained and tied up from shewing their gifts in speaking or scrupling till they were called thereto; that is, they being allowed to prophesy publicly, and so to propound questions and make objections, (which they call scrupling,) they bound them up in this covenant, which had the force of law, from doing it uncalled. I would fain know whether this be not to limit the Spirit, (as you speak,) and to stint it to times, as you say we do it to words. For if a man be never so full, he must have no vent without a call from the church. And how, I pray you, doth this differ from an ecclesiastical canon, as to its force and obligation, but only that it hath another name, and all old canons must be laid aside to make way for this new covenant? They tell us also expressly, that the magistrate may compel men to keep their covenant, though not to enter into it[e]. And for spreading of infectious doctrines,

"The true Constitution of a particular visible church, proved by Scripture, wherein is briefly demonstrated by questions and answers what officers, worship, and government Christ hath ordained in his Church: by that reverend and learned divine Mr. Iohn Cotton, B. D., and pastor of Boston in New England."—4to. Lond. 1642.

The following are Cotton's words:

"*Quest.* What sorts of ministers or officers hath God set in his throne?

Answ. Some extraordinary, as apostles, prophets, and evangelists; some ordinary and perpetuall, as bishops and deacons."—p. 2.

It is not to be confounded with a publication by Clement Cotton, "The Converts Catechisme, wherein by way of Question and Answer are seaven of the divine graces of the Holy Spirit anatomized," &c.—8vo, Lond. 1616.]

[d] Church of Salem in New England. [See the form at length, ibid. p. 18.]

[e] Ibid. Narration of Church Courses, cap. xv. [p. 49.]

Mr. Wheelwright, a minister, and Mrs. Hutchinson, a pretended prophetess, were banished the country. Several of their followers also were imprisoned, some fined, some disfranchised, some banished, and all disarmed, for petitioning the court in behalf of Mr. Wheelwright, and remonstrating with due submission, (so their words were,) that they conceived he deserved no such censure[f]. A great many more remarkable things there are in that story, which I cannot stand to recite; but must proceed to tell you, that as for others who are not of their way, there is just no liberty at all. For as they will not grant communion to members of other churches not constituted as they are, so if a company of approved godly people should sit down near them, (where their power reaches,) differing from them only in some points of church-government, some of them tell us, not only that they "shall not be owned as a sister-church, but also be in danger of severe punishment by the civil magistrate[g]."

N. C. What is all this to our Independents?

C. They extol both the men and the ways of New England to the skies; and therefore approve of them, I suppose, not only as good, but as excelling all other. The men, they say, "have testified their sincerity to all generations future by the greatest undertaking, except that of our father Abraham, viz. leaving this country to go thither, merely to worship God more purely[h]." And as for their "ways and practices," they are "improved to a better edition and greater refinement" than those of other reformed churches, which makes it reasonable to believe, that when they covenanted "to reform according to the example of the best reformed churches[i]," they had New England in their eye as their pattern: for those general words, as

[f] Proceedings of the General Court holden at New Town Oct. 2, 1637, and the Apology in defence of the proceedings holden at Boston, 1636. ["A briefe Apologie in defence of the generall proceedings of the Court, holden at Boston the ninth day of the first moneth, 1636, against Mr. J. Wheelwright, a member there, by occasion of a sermon delivered there in the same congregation."—A Short Story of the rise and progress of the Familists, &c., by Thomas Welde, p. 46, quoted above, p. 558.]

[g] Narration, &c. cap. x. [p. 38.]

[h] Apologetical Narration, 1643. p. 5. [See p. 325 above.]

[i] [This is the language of the Solemn League and Covenant. Compare above, p. 338.]

Mr. Feak[k] rightly observes, "left it under suspense and undetermined which of the reformed churches had obtained the highest degree of reformation. The Scots and their friends judged the kirk of Scotland the best reformed; the dissenting brethren approved the reformation of New England to be most excellent." But be this as it will, we have learned thus much from what hath been related, that the churches of a better edition and greater refinement do not think it unlawful to use forms in God's holy ordinances; unto which they bind those who come under their power, restraining them also from opening their mouths, when perhaps they think themselves full of the Spirit; and denying leave to others to set up a different way from theirs in their neighbourhood. As for our Independents, I can show from their books that they think it necessary to be as severe in a great many cases, and I remember as heavy complaints of them as ever they made of the Presbyterians; and have been told that they "daily spit their venom privately and publicly against those that separated from them," &c.[l]

N. C. It will be too long to relate all those things. But I would fain know how this will stand with Christian liberty?

C. Do you think that it consists in being tied to no law at all?

N. C. None but God's.

C. Take heed what you say.

N. C. In matters of worship, I mean.

C. That's absurd, as I have shown you. God's law hath only given us the general rules whereby things are to be ordered in the church; according to which our governors are to make particular laws, and we are to obey them, or else there will be nothing but confusion. Yet still our Christian liberty remains; because, first, we are not tied to this or that pattern or model, but our governors have liberty to establish

[k] Beam of Light, p. 25. [See p. 483 above.]

[l] Vanity of the present Churches, pp. 3. 11. ["The Vanitie of the present Churches and uncertainty of their Preaching discovered, wherein the pretended immediate teaching of the Spirit is denyed, and the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures teaching is maintained: with a new and true method of reading thereof, for the peace of the mind, and rule of life."—anon. 8vo, Lond. 1649.]

whatsoever (being in itself indifferent) shall seem to them most expedient for maintaining comeliness and order. And secondly, when any orders are established, this is our liberty, (as our divines teach you,) that we do not use them as any part of divine worship, (as some of you do,) nor as meritorious and satisfactory, nor as necessary to justification or salvation, but only for discipline and good order's sake. And lastly, by consequence, the same authority may alter them, and hath not so tied up itself to them, but that it is at liberty to abolish those in case of inconvenience arising, and establish others in the room. But such a liberty as leaves men loose from all laws and orders, save those that they shall choose themselves, is a wild fancy, which your ministers condemn as well as ours. Mr. Dury, for instance, (a very moderate Presbyterian,) tells the Independent brethren, we must expect no such liberty as shall "break the bond of spiritual unity, which by the allowance of a public toleration of a different church government may be occasioned. To keep therefore unity entire, a few must yield unto many, except they can fairly persuade those many to yield to them[m]."

N. C. But what if they cannot agree?

C. I was going to tell you. "If they cannot agree, it is just they should forfeit their spiritual right and liberty which Christ hath conferred upon them, and fall under the arbitrament of the secular power, which ought to look unto its own safety; lest those that make divisions, and multiply breaches in the church about small matters, disturb also by that means the public peace of the state[n]." Of this mind also was Mr. John Cotton, (a mild Independent,) "Good kings," saith he[o], "ought to put upon their people wholesome laws and strait binding to the purity of religion, and the worship of God. It is no impeachment to their Christian liberty, as the Anabaptists dote, but an ornament to their beauty, making their necks comely as with chains

[m] Epistolary Discourse. [p. 22.]

[n] Ibid. [p. 24.]

[o] Upon Canticles i. 10. p. 44. Use 2. [p. 26. "A brief Exposition with practical observations upon the whole book of Canticles, never before printed, by that late pious and worthy divine Mr. John Cotton, Pastor of Boston in New England, published by Anthony Tuckney, D. D. Master of St. John's Colledge in Cambridge."—8vo, Lond. 1655.]

of gold." And a little after[p], "It is no impeachment of Christian liberty to bow to Christian laws: yea, it is the beauty of a Christian church to wear those chains, those laws which were made for the good of the church; and it was their profaneness and rebellion that said, *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*"

N. C. He speaks of those purer laws which they found out, not such as yours.

C. It is as much to my purpose if he did; for it proves he would have the people strictly tied to laws, and wear these chains always about their necks; and our governors think theirs as good as any, and so may as innocently bind men fast to them, as you tie them to yours. And let me tell you, both Presbyterians and Independents would have their orders so strict, that their people should not be allowed the liberty of going to hear where they please. Mr. Edwards[q], I remember, in his catalogue of errors, heresies and blasphemies, puts down this for one, "that it is part of men's Christian liberty not to hear their own ministers, but to go and hear where they will, and whom they think they may profit most by." And the New England churches condemned those that said[r], "If a man think he may edify better in another congregation than in his own, that is ground enough to depart ordinarily from word, seals, &c., notwithstanding the offence of the church, often manifested to him for so doing."

N. C. But why should there be any penalties?

C. You may as well ask me over again, Why any laws? which will be ridiculous without them. But I wonder you are not ashamed to speak against penalties and force, who pressed the Covenant with more severity than ever any body did conformity. What crossness is this, (as the bishop of Down said[s],) that "when we press men to conform to the orders of our church, they allege it is contrary to Christian liberty to enforce men to the doing of any thing against their conscience, and

[p] Ibid. Use 3.

[q] Gangræna, part i. Error 125. [p. 30.]

[r] Catalogue of the Opinions condemned by an Assembly of the Churches, Aug. 30, 1637. Error 80. [From the Compilation by Welde referred to above, p. 558.]

[s] Visitation speech at Lisnegarvy, August 26, 1638. [p. 36. By Henry Leslie, p. 465, above.]

that a man should be fully resolved in his own mind of the lawfulness of that which he doth! and yet we urge that only under pain of suspension and excommunication, and that after much patience and forbearance, using all fair means to persuade them: but they compel men to subscribe the Covenant against their conscience by pike and pistol; threatening no less than loss of life, or goods and lands, in case of refusal. By this we may judge of their sincerity, and what they would do in other things, had they power in their hands." The truth is, one could scarce live among you when you had power; for all that would not take the Covenant were held to be malignants, and if you know not what was to be done with them, an eminent person will tell you.

N. C. Who do you mean?

C. Do you not remember who it was that complimented the parliament as the "keepers of our vineyard," and commended them for being "wanting in nothing" to their duty?——

N. C. What then?

C. You shall hear. He saith they had endeavoured to "fence the vineyard with a settled militia, and then to gather out the malignants as stones...and to make a winepress therein for the squeezing of delinquents[t].

N. C. I know not who this was.

C. I will be so civil to his memory as to let this pass without naming him. But he was one of those you call a moderate Presbyterian, by which we may know what mind the zealots are of. And as for the Independents, they were for an exact

[t] Epistle before the Sermon to the Commons, January 25, 1643. ["The Covenant-avenging Sword brandished; in a Sermon before the honourable house of Commons, at their late solemn fast, Jan. 25, by John Arrowsmith, B. D. preacher of the Gospel, King's Linne in Norfolke. Published by order of that house,"—4to, Lond. 1643.

The author, a constant preacher before the parliament, was born at Gateshead, near Newcastle upon Tyne, March 29, 1602, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and afterwards chosen fellow of Catharine Hall. He was elected one of the university preachers, was beneficed at Lynn in Norfolk; subsequently preacher at St. Margaret's, Ironmonger Lane, London, and nominated one of the Westminster Assembly. He was constant in attendance during the session, assisted in drawing up the Assembly's Catechism, and was one of the divines approved by parliament to be consulted in ecclesiastical matters. Dr. Beale, master of St. John's College, having been expelled in 1644 for refusing the covenant, Arrowsmith was constituted mas-

and thorough reformation too (for that which they were about "had cost God dear," they said, and he would not "lay out so much," for an imperfect, poor, and low reformation) and therefore exhorted the parliament not to spare the lash to effect it: but do as Jesus Christ did when he came to purge the temple; "not only chide the money-changers, but whip them away, and overthrow the very tables, lest they should recover their trade again[x]." Which others delivered in this phrase, "Dagon is begun to fall before the ark, his head is off; but let not so much as the stump remain:" i. e. Give no liberty to these church of England men; let them not enjoy the least relic of their worship. And accordingly, you know, I showed you the last time, there was an ordinance prohibiting the use of Common Prayer under great penalties in any private family, not excepting the king's[y].

N. C. I remember it: and some say it was an unworthy construction you make of the words; there was no such intention.

C. They had better have held their tongues, for I shall prove it to purpose. When commissioners were sent down to treat with his majesty at the Isle of Wight, he was content, as he had expressed himself before, May the 12th[z], that the worship

ter in his room by authority of the earl of Manchester, the parliamentary commissioner, on the 11th of April. He was appointed in the same year one of the committee for an accommodation with Scotland. In 1647 he took his doctor's degree, and was chosen vice-chancellor. Four years later he was elected Regius Professor of Divinity upon the death of Dr. Collins, and about the same time presented to the rectory of Somersham.

In 1653 he vacated the mastership of St. John's for that of Trinity College, and in 1655 resigned his professorship, Dr. Anthony Tuckney succeeding him in both preferments. He acted under the protectorate as one of the triers, or examiners of candidates for ordination. He is commended by his contemporaries for his blameless character, and indefatigable labours in the ministry; but his literary productions, while abounding in the vulgar rhetoric generally characteristic of the puritan preachers, exhibit no remarkable proofs of intellectual power or cultivation. He died in Feb. 1659, and was buried on the 24th of that month in the chapel of Trinity College.—Calamy's Silenced ministers, p. 78. Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 968, iv. 142. Baker's MS. Collections, quoted by Brook, iii. 315.]

[x] See Mr. Bridge, Sermon before the Commons, Nov. 29, 1643. [p. 24. Reprinted in his Works, vol. iv. p. 338.]

[y] Friendly Debate. [part i. p. 417

[z] ["In answer to all the propositions concerning religion, his ma-

of God should be performed according to the Directory for three years: provided only that his majesty and those of his judgment who could not in conscience submit thereunto, might not be obliged to it, but left free to their own way[a]. But this would not be granted; for you must know that though the parliament had ordained[b], the chapels or places in the houses of the king and his children should continue free for the exercise of divine duties without any elders; yet this was no more than they allowed to every peer in the realm, and

jesty proposeth, that he will confirm the presbyterial government, the Assembly of divines at Westminster, and the Directory, for three years, being the time set down by the two houses; so that his majesty and his household be not hindered from that form of God's service which they formerly have. And also that a free consultation and debate be had with the divines at Westminster (twenty of his majesty's nomination being added unto them), whereby it may be determined by his majesty and the two houses how the church shall be governed after the said three years, or sooner, if differences may be agreed."—His majesty's message to both houses in further answer to their propositions from Holdenby, May 12, 1647.—King Charles' Works, vol. ii. p. 616. Sanderson, 982.]

[a] This was September 29, 1648. [" Concerning the Church,

"His Majesty will consent that the calling and sitting of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster be confirmed for three years by Act of Parliament.

"And will by Act of P^t confirme for three years the Directory for the public worship of God in the kingdomes of England and Ireland, and dominion of Wales.

"And will likewise confirme for three years by Act of Parliament the forme of Church Government which ye have presented to him, to be used for the churches of England and Ireland, and dominion of Wales: provided that his Majesty, and those of his judgment, or any others who cannot in conscience submit thereunto, be not in the meantime obliged to comply with the same government or forme of worship, but have free practice of their owne profession."—P. 2. of a parliamentary pamphlet, entitled, " The King's most gracious concessions delivered to the Commissioners at Newport, and debated there, Sept. 29. and sent by his Majesty to his two houses of Parliament at Westminster, and read there, Octob. 2. 1648. London, printed for R. Royston, in Ivy-lane, 1648." King Charles' Works, vol. ii. p. 663. Whitelocke, p. 340. Rushworth, 1281. Clarendon, 681.]

[b] Ordin. of March 14. 1645. [See Art. 7. " That the Chappels or places in the houses of the King and his children shall continue free for the exercise of divine duties to be performed according to the Directory, and not otherwise." p. 8. of " An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, for keeping of scandalous persons from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the enabling of congregations for the choice of Elders, and supplying of defects in some former ordinances and directions of Parliament concerning Church-Government:" ordered to be printed Die Sabbathi, 14 Martii, 164$\frac{4}{5}$.]

those duties also were to be performed according to the Directory, and not otherwise." And therefore I find his majesty was fain, "for the satisfaction of the two houses," (so his words are,) to make a further concession, and to profess he would not "insist upon any provision for continuance of the use of the Book of Common Prayer in his majesty's chapel for himself and his household:" nevertheless he declared he intended "to use some other set form of divine service[c]." But nothing would satisfy, unless he would do according to the Directory: they would not allow a set form in his own house; no, though he declared in a farther explication of his mind, that he could not with a good conscience "communicate in a public form of divine service and administration of sacraments, where it is wholly uncertain what the minister will say to God:" and told them he hoped they would not "think it reasonable to offer any violence to the conscience of their sovereign[d]." For in their answer[e], they tell him twice, "though they would not force his conscience," yet desire it may be "informed and rectified," that so it might agree with theirs, who were his great council: that is, they would not call it by that name; but he must either agree to them, or be as he was: and so in fine he was content to wave even a set form[f]. Do you not see now how we were deceived by this word *liberty:* and that the king himself could have no benefit of it? Had you not a great care of tender consciences, and were exceeding nice in pressing men to that wherein they were not fully satisfied? Certainly his

[c] This was Novemb. 4, 1648. [Rushworth, 1321. Whitelocke, 348.]

[d] ["His Majesties answer to the Commissioners' paper about the Church, November 18, 1648 at Newport."—p. 2. of "His Majesties ultimate answers to the papers and replyes of the Commissioners, concerning Ireland and Episcopacy. London, printed for Richard Lowndes, 1648." Rushworth, p, 1334.]

[e] November 20. [ibid. p. 6. Rushworth, p. 1334. Whitelocke, 356.]

[f] Reply, November 21. ["Concerning his Majesties declaration for a set form of divine service, in his Answer of the 4th of this instant, his Majesty having now observed the latitude of the Directory is willing that that expression shall not be taken as any part of his answer. As to all other particulars, his Majesty adheres to his former answers. Newport, Nov. 21, 1648."—From "His Majesties most gracious concessions concerning Church Government, and set forms of Lyturgy, in answer to two Messages of Parliament, bearing date November the 11th and November 20. London: printed for Richard Royston, Nov. 27. 1648." Rushworth, 1335. Whitelocke, 357.]

majesty had reason to say, "If it be liberty of conscience they desire, he who wants it is most ready to give it[g]." And what do you think of his majesty's earnest desire to have some of his chaplains attend him[h]? Was it not barbarous to deliberate one moment whether it should be allowed or no; especially by those who cried up liberty so much? And yet he was fain to renew his message to them the next month[i], and to represent the necessity of it, for the guidance of his conscience. But

[g] Declar. of Jan. 18. after votes of no addresses. ["The King's declaration to all his subjects of whatsoever nation, quality, or condition; published by his Majesties special command." Printed in the year 1648, dated "Carisbrook Castle, 18 Jan. 1647. To all my people, of whatsoever nation, quality, or condition," and signed "Charles R." —Sanderson, p. 1044. King Charles' Works, vol. ii. p. 650.]

[h] Which he made Febr. 17, 1646. ["Holdenby, 17 Febr. 1646. (164$\frac{7}{6}$.)

Since I have never dissembled nor hid my conscience, and that I am not yet satisfied with those alterations in Religion to which ye desire my consent, I will not lose time in giving reasons (which are obvious to every-body) why it is fit for me to be attended by some of my chaplains, whose opinions as clergymen I esteem and reverence, not only for the exercise of my conscience, but also for clearing of my judgment concerning the present differences in Religion; as I have at full declared to Mr. Marshall and his fellow minister, having shewed them that this is the best and likeliest means of giving me satisfaction (which, without it I cannot have) in these things, whereby the distractions of the Church may be the better settled. Wherefore I desire that at least two of these Reverend Divines, whose names I have here set down, may have free liberty to wait upon me, for the discharge of their duty to me according to their function.

Charles R.

"Bishop of London. [William Juxon.]
"Bishop of Salisbury. [Brian Duppa.]
"Bishop of Peterborough. [John Towers.]
"Doctor Selden. Clerk of My Closet.
"Doctor March. Dean of Yorke.
"Doctor Sanderson.
"Doctor Bayly.
"Doctor Haywood.
"Doctor Beale.
"Doctor Fuller.
"Doctor Hammon.
"Doctor Tayler.

To the Speaker of the House of Peers *pro tempore;* to be communicated to the Lords and Commons in the Parliament assembled at Westminster."—Lords' Journals, Feb. 19. King's Works, vol. i. p. 243.

The second letter having been transmitted to the Commons by the hands of Sir Edward Leech, and read in the house, Mar. 9. it was resolved, "that the debate of this letter be laid aside till Saturday next" (Mar. 13.), but the house adjourned on the latter day without taking the subject into its consideration, and seems never to have reverted to it. — See Commons' Journals, tom. v. p. 108.]

[i] March 6. [The king's second letter, in which he complains of being kept seventeen days without

still they stop their ears to his desires; for in his answers to their propositions[k], he "respites his answer to what concerned the Covenant, because he could not give a resolution in a matter of conscience, till he might be assisted with the advice of some of his own chaplains, which had hitherto been denied him." Nay, when he was at Carisbrook[l], I find him complaining that he had none about him (except a barber which came down with the commissioners) that ever he named to wait upon him. "A piece of rigour and barbarism greater than is ever used by Christians to the meanest prisoners and greatest malefactors[m]," &c.

N. C. I know the words. But what is this to penalties?

C. You led me out of the way: and yet not altogether, for you may see by this that Christian liberty is but a phrase, and signifies nothing, when any but yourselves challenge the benefit of it. But if you would hear any more of the other, I must tell you the Independents were for some punishments, though more mild than yours. For which I must refer you to Mr. Burroughs[n], (and not stay to recite his words at length) who

an answer, was read in the house of lords, March 8; when the question being put, "Whether their Lordships will allow any of these number that the King desires in his list, to go down to him to Holdenby, to reside there for twenty days," it was "resolved in the negative."—Journals, p. 68: but at the same time it was ordered, "that this house think fit that Dr. Love be sent to the King."]

[k] May 12. 1647. ["His Majesties most gracious Message, May the 12th from Holdenby, to the Lords and Commons in the Parliament of England, assembled at Westminster and the Commissioners of the Parliament of Scotland; with his answer to the propositions."—published in a 4to pamphlet, 1647. Lords' Journals, tom. x. p. 193. Sanderson, p. 982.]

[l] Message of August the 10th, 1648. [Rushworth, 1226. Lords' Journals, Aug. 14. tom. x. p. 437.]

[m] Icon. Basil. ["If I had asked my revenues, my power of the militia, or any one of my kingdoms, it had been no wonder to have been denied in those things, where the evil policy of men forbids all just restitution, lest they should confess an injurious usurpation. But to deny me the ghostly comfort of my chaplains seems a greater rigor and barbarity than is ever used by Christians to the meanest prisoners and greatest malefactors; whom though the justice of the law deprives of worldly comforts, yet the mercy of religion allows them the benefit of their clergy, as not aiming at once to destroy their bodies and to damn their souls."—chap. 24. Works of King Charles, i. p. 116.]

[n] Irenicum, pages 36, 37. [Jeremiah Burroughs, one of the chief ornaments of the Independent party, was born in the year 1599, and educated at Cambridge, but was obliged to quit that university, and

tells you men may be restrained by violence from publishing gross errors, notwithstanding their plea of conscience: and

afterwards the kingdom, on account of non-conformity. He entered upon the duties of the ministry as colleague to Edmund Calamy at Bury St. Edmund's. In 1631 he became rector of Titshall, in the county of Norfolk, but upon the publication of Bishop Wren's articles and injunctions in 1636 he was suspended and deprived of his living. For a time he found shelter under the protection of the earl of Warwick, the Puritans' uniform patron; but that asylum proving insecure, he fled to Rotterdam, where he was chosen teacher to the congregational school of which William Bridge was pastor. Of this passage in his life, as well as of certain circumstances which had been construed unfavourably for his character, he has himself supplied an account in his Vindication against Edwards' Gangræna. Returning to England on the relaxation of persecution under the long parliament, he at once rose to distinction and influence; being chosen preacher at Cripplegate and Stepney.

Burroughs lectured at Stepney at seven o'clock in the morning, and Mr. William Greenhill at three in the afternoon, which gave occasion to their being called by Hugh Peters from the pulpit of that church, one the 'morning star,' the other the 'evening star of Stepney.'

He was elected one of the Westminster Assembly, forming one of the little band known as the 'dissenting brethren,' and united in concert with the rest, Goodwin, Nye, Bridge and Sympson, in presenting to parliament their Apologetical Narration, in defence of their characteristic principles, which are such as have distinguished the Independents down to the present day, marking out a middle course between the rival extremes of Presbyterianism and Brownism. He subscribed with the same authors in putting forth jointly in 1645, their "Reasons against certain propositions concerning Presbyterial Government," and was strenuous in the debates of the Assembly in opposing the claim of divine right set up for Presbytery. His name is one of those most frequently mentioned in Lightfoot's diary, and Goodwin's MS. notes of their proceedings. In 1645 he was chosen one of the committee of accommodation, in which he held a prominent part. Though he was made the subject of the most virulent attacks by such rancorous writers as Edwards and Vicars, he appears to have been distinguished for mildness of character and blamelessness of life. His tolerant temper and love of peace had led him to conform in many minor points under the episcopal rule, for which he was bitterly arraigned at a later period, but sought to disarm his opponents by acknowledging his concessions, while he replied, "As for the new conformity, God kept me from it: and my sin in the old makes me be of a more forbearing spirit towards those that differ from me." Baxter was in the habit of saying, that "if all the Episcopalians had been like archbishop Ussher, all the Presbyterians like Mr. Stephen Marshall, and all the Independents like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs, the breaches of the church would soon have been healed." His "Irenicum," a treatise published with the view of healing the prevalent divisions, was his last work. His incessant labours, and his grief for the distractions of the times, are said to have hastened

that " some trouble" may be laid in their way who hold errors of less moment, " so far as to take off the wantonness of their spirits, and neglect of means." Nay, where men " by their weakness" render themselves " less serviceable to the commonwealth or church," he saith, they may be " denied some privileges granted to others :" of which he gives you instances.

N. C. What! no respect to tender consciences?

C. Yes: but if a man be proud and turbulent in his carriage and despise his betters, the same person tells you[o], "you may be sure the devil is in his will, rather than in his conscience. For though an erroneous conscience may cause one to hold fast an error, it doth not put him upon proud, scornful, and turbulent behaviour. When a man by reason of his conscience (it may be the weakness of it) differs from his brethren, he had need carry himself with all humility, and meekness, and self-denial in all things. He should be willing to be a servant to every man in what lawfully he may: that thereby he may show to all, that it is not from any wilfulness, but merely tenderness of his conscience, that he cannot come off to that which his brethren can do; whom yet he reverences, and in his carriage towards them shows that he esteems them his betters. But if a man that is weak, very much beneath others in parts and graces (he might have said, any one that dissents from the generality of Christians, and his governors where he lives,) shall carry himself high, imperious, contemning and vilifying those who differ from him, and be contentious with them; there is great reason to think the corruption is in the will, rather than any where else. And if there should be some conscience yet in those men, their heart-distempers may justly forfeit their right of pleading their conscience. Those who oppose them, if they do it in a Christian way, may justify what they do before God, and say to him, when he calls them to an account for their dealing so with those that professed conscience; Lord, we were willing to have dealt with them in all tenderness, if we could have seen conscientiousness in their carriage; but we saw

his end. He died of consumption, Nov. 14. 1646, in the forty-seventh year of his age.—Wood, Athen. Oxon. iii. 383, 1146. Burroughs' Vindication, passim. Brook's Puritans, iii. 18.]

[o] Consider how well you follow this rule, who are so peremptory and proud, &c.

nothing but scornfulness, pride, imperiousness, turbulency, conceitedness: we could see nothing of the spirit of Jesus Christ acting them in their way[o]," &c. Thus he also resolves this question, How shall we know a man to be obstinate, when he opposes the judgment of many more godly and learned than himself? 1. "If he oppose the common principles of Christianity. 2. If in other matters his carriage be turbulent and altogether unbeseeming a Christian, differing from his brethren. 3. Where there is neglect of those means of information, which he hath nothing to say against. Lastly, If he so cross his own principles, that he appear to be self-condemned[p]." Think, I beseech you, whether this be not your case.

N. C. I will think of it when I am at more leisure.

C. And think also of these words of the same Mr. Burroughs, in the Epistle Dedicatory of his Sermon, preached before the house of Peers, Nov. 26, 1645. "For connivance at blasphemies, or damnable heresies, God forbid any should open his mouth. Those who are guilty herein, against the light of nature, should be taken off from the face of the earth; and such as are guilty against supernatural light, are to be refrained and kept from the society of men, that they infect not others[q]."

N. C. I remember something of it.

C. And you may learn by it that the Independents, in process of time, found a necessity of going further in their restraints of men's liberty, and in punishing offenders of this kind, than they did at the first.

N. C. I understand no reason for this severity.

C. No? Hear, I beseech you, what Mr. Williams himself saith in his Bloody Tenent, chap. xxxiii. "It is a truth, the mischief of a blind Pharisee, blind guidance is greater than if he acted treasons, murders, &c. And the loss of one soul by his seduction is a greater mischief than if he blew up parliaments, and cut the throats of kings and emperors; so precious is that invaluable jewel of a soul[r]." Concerning which passage Mr.

[o] You may read this in Mr. Burroughs, Ib. [p. 32.]

[p] Ibid. [p. 95.]

[q] ["A sermon preached before the right honourable the house of Peers in the Abbey at Westminster, the 26th of November, 1645, being the day appointed for solemne and publique humiliation, by Jer. Burroughes."—published by order of house, 4to, Lond. 1646.]

[r] [Roger Williams, a native of Wales, was one of the most remarkable of the non-conformists, whom the

Gillespie speaks thus in his Miscellany Questions[s], chap. xiii. "I could wish this written in marble, or recorded upon the parliament walls, as the confession of one who hath pleaded most for liberty and toleration to soul-murdering heretics and deceivers. But if any magistrates will not have respect to the honour of God and salvation of souls, let them take heed to their own interest. When the Church of Christ sinketh in a state, let not that state think to swim."……

N. C. What do you tell me of him? He was a rigid presbyterian.

C. True. But I was going to show you how justly he makes this reflection; and demonstrates the franticness of this prin-

persecutions of Laud drove to seek an asylum in the new world. He there founded the state of Providence and Rhode Island, and "is supposed to have been the founder of the first free government the world ever knew, at least, since the rise of antichrist; effectually securing to all subjects free and full liberty of conscience," Brook's Lives, iii. 479.

In 1644 he came to England with the view of procuring a charter for his new colony, which he succeeded in obtaining from parliament; and while in London published his "Bloody Tenent of Persecution for the cause of conscience," 4to. 1644. This work gave great offence to the Presbyterian party then in the ascendant. Among other attacks upon him, a reply was written by John Cotton of Boston, in New England, entitled, "The Bloody Tenent washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, 1647," to which Williams rejoined with "The Bloody Tenent yet more bloody, by Mr. Cotton's endeavour to wash it white in the blood of the Lambe; of whose precious blood, spilt in the blood of his servants, and of the blood of millions spilt in former and later wars, for conscience sake, that most bloody Tenent of Persecution for cause of conscience, upon a second trial, is found now more apparently, and more notoriously guilty." In this Rejoynder to Mr. Cotton, are principally

I. The nature of Persecution,
II. The power of the civill sword in spirituals, } Examined.

III. The Parliaments permission of dissenting consciences. } Justified.

4to. Lond. 1652. A correspondence had previously passed between Cotton and Williams, on the subject of persecution, or the use of the civil sword for the repression of error, and propagation of the truth, to which the latter frequently refers in the last named work.

Williams was particularly zealous and laborious in promoting the conversion of the Indians, an account of whose manners, customs, and languages, he afterwards published. He was so universally beloved and revered, that he was more than once chosen governor of the colony; he nevertheless continued pastor of the Baptist church, to the end of his days. He died in the year 1683, aged eighty-four years.]

[s] [P. 163.]

ciple, which he calls the "*Kodeshhak Kodashim*, the holy of holies of the sectaries[t]:" "that a false religion and worship will not hurt the state, in case the worshippers break no civil law[u]."

N. C. I have a number of things to say, but I see you are in haste, and therefore will let them alone.

C. You may propound them some other time, if upon consideration of these things you be not satisfied; and to save you and myself any further labour, I shall commend a few directions to you for the guiding of your conscience, and so conclude.

N. C. Let's hear them.

C. I cannot expect you should bear any respect to my advice: therefore I will speak to you in another man's words, which are so good, that it is a pity they should be forgot. They were writ above threescore years ago, by Mr. Richard Bernard, in a book of his where he teaches you how to "carry yourself in a church or state," so as that you may "seek the public quiet of it[v]."

N. C. How, I pray you? I will study his counsels.

C. "First, maintain and uphold all that is manifestly good in it. 2. If there be any manifest evils, labour in your place by the best means to have them amended peaceably. 3. Bear with lighter faults for a time, till a fit occasion be offered to have them amended. 4. As for likelihoods of evil, make them not apparent evil by ill interpretation; where neither the state intends it, nor so maintains it. 5. Take doubtful things even in the better part. 6. Judiciously discern between the abuse of a thing, and that which may be well used; lest, in abhorring the abuse, thou also do utterly condemn the thing itself, and the use thereof. 7. Let not the flourishing condition (as thou fanciest it) of any foreign church or state, make thee unthankful for the present good thou enjoyest at home, and loathe thine own happiness. 8. Mark and hold the difference between these things; the equity of law and the execution; the truth generally established and professed, and the personal errors of some:

[t] [P. 162.]
[u] [P. 164.]
[v] Christian Advertisements, and Counsels of Peace, 1608. [P. 3, sqq.]

between soundness of doctrine, and bad application; between substance and circumstance; between the very being of a thing, and the well being of it; between what is necessary, and what is only convenient and desirable; between a commandment, and a commandment to thee; between what is lawful, and what is expedient. 9. Never presume to reform others before thou hast well ordered thyself. 10. Do not disobey the evident commandment of God; and when there is nothing but probability of sinning in obeying the precept of thy governors, do not set opinion before judgment. Set aside fancy, and do not refuse to obey authority, where it is not plain thou shalt sin against God. Be more loath to offend a lawful magistrate, than many private persons. Where thou canst not yield, there humbly crave pardon; where thou canst not be tolerated, be contented with correction for safety of conscience; and bear what thou canst not avoid, with a patient mind. Remember that to stand more upon avoiding dislike in private persons, than in offending the public authority, is no better than an humouring of men, to increase discontentedness, rather than to preserve the public peace and welfare. Nay, it is better to cross some men's affections without sin to God, than to neglect most certain duty, let people perish, open a gap to the enemy, lose thy liberty, and no whit better the Church of God.

N. C. O but in this we must be very tender, and disobey men rather than God.

C. You should be very tender and careful lest you disobey both, by breaking the commands of your governors, when in so doing you follow no command of God; for which end he gives you this rule: "As thou mayest not out of policy, for fear of trouble, furnish thyself with distinctions and evade thy duty, where the word is plain; so thou oughtest not out of scrupulosity to imagine sin where there is none, and trouble thy conscience with fear of transgressing, where there is no law. The one breeds atheism, the other is the mother of superstition. Therefore in indifferent things make no question for conscience sake; so it be that neither holiness, merit, nor necessity be put therein, nor used for any part of God's worship, but for decency, order, and edification[x]."

[x] [P. 8.]

N. C. But what if I am in doubt, and afraid to use these things you call indifferent?

C. In this case he hath given you such good directions, that I need seek for no other. "The substance of them is this: you would do well to examine yourself whence your doubt arises, whether from serious consideration and a judgment convinced; or that it be only a niceness of dislike, coming from a desire not to be troubled with them, or for that thou hast not been used to them, or because some cannot away with them, or from ignorance and want of knowledge, or perhaps from a godly jealousy and fear of doing amiss, (I may add, from a natural timorousness and uncertainty of mind, which can resolve nothing.) If the ground be not a judgment enlightened and convinced, it is not trouble of conscience, but a dislike that works discontentedness upon some of the former grounds, which must be removed by consideration and settling your judgment upon the word of God and sound reason. Nay, it will be fit to consider, whether this doubting do not arise through your own default, by looking out reasons to increase your dislike, and neglecting to search for arguments to give you satisfaction. If this be your case, as it is certain it is of too many, take as great pains to resolve yourself, as you have done to bring yourself into doubting, else you deal but partially; and have a care you be not too highly conceited of yourself, and look upon your own reasons through the vapour of affection[y]."

N. C. My scruples are grounded upon this reason; that to make a thing lawful in God's worship, it is not enough that it is not forbidden, but it must be commanded.

C. Examine well without prejudice what our divines have replied an hundred times to this, and you will find it an absurd principle; or for the present only weigh what he saith: "Why should a man be more scrupulous to seek to have a plain command for every thing he doth in ecclesiastical matters, even about things in themselves indifferent, than about matters politic in civil affairs? Men in these matters know not the ground nor end of many things which they yield unto, upon a general command to obey authority, and knowing them not to be directly against God's will; and yet our obedience in all civil

[y] [P. II.]

matters must be first of conscience, and secondly, as serving the Lord, which cannot be without knowledge and persuasion that we do well even in that particular in which we obey; which men usually for conscience sake inquire not into, but rest themselves with a general commandment of obeying lawful authority, so it be not against a plain commandment of God. What therefore doth let, but that a man may so satisfy himself in matters ecclesiastical? I must tell you (saith he) that the curious searching so particularly into every thing to have full satisfaction, hath so wrought in these days upon men's wits, to bring distinctions, that the more men seek in doubt for resolution, the further they are from it."

N. C. What shall a man do then?

C. He must observe these rules of that good man. 1. "Keep all main truths, which are most plainly set down in the word, or by the law of nature engraven on every man's heart. 2. Believe every thing truly and necessarily gathered by an immediate consequence from the text. 3. Follow evident examples fit for him either as a Christian, or his special calling requires. 4. Avoid that which is plainly forbidden, or follows necessarily by an immediate consequence. 5. Follow true antiquity and the general practice of the church of God in all ages, where they have not erred from the evident truth of God. 6. If thou sufferest, (saith he,) let it be for known truth and against known wickedness; for which thou hast example in God's word, or of the holy martyrs in church story: but beware of far-fetched consequences, or of suffering for new devices, and for things formerly unto all ages unknown, seem they never so holy and just unto man[z]."

N. C. But what if the thing commanded seem to me a sin?

C. He answers, "Some things sinfully commanded may be obeyed without sin, as Joab obeyed David in numbering the people. Secondly, consider how dost thou conceive it to be sin? Is it simply so? Show me the prohibition: else, *where no law is, there is no transgression.* Or is it so accidentally? that is, in the abuse, which may be removed, or in respect of the ignorance of the lawfulness, making thee to doubt and fear to offend? Use all diligence for resolution. And if it be not a

[z] [P. 14.]

known sin to thee certainly, but only by probability, consider whether probability of sinning may give thee a sufficient discharge for not obeying a plain precept, and to neglect necessary duties otherwise, both to God and man."

N. C. Would you have me do things while I am full of scruples whether I may or no? Doth not the Scripture say, *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*[z]*?*

C. He takes no notice of that place; but since you mention it, I'll give you an answer, not from myself, whose judgment you value not much, but from a divine[a], who, we are told, suffered much under the bishops. "Things wherein doubts arise," saith he, "are of a double nature. First, such as are merely arbitrary," and at mine own dispose. "These may be left undone without scruple, but not done with it; because the inconvenience of omission is but a little self-suffering. Such are the things the apostle speaks of; forbearing the use of our liberty in eating flesh, or the like case. If a man doubt whether he may do that, or whether he may play at tables or cards, the omission here being no more but only denying ourselves a little content, the doubt should make a man forbear. But then there are other things that are not arbitrary, but under a command; as coming to the sacrament, obedience to the higher powers in things lawful. Now if scruples arise about these, and a man doubts he sins if he act, and he also doubts he sins if he forbear, it is neither clear that the thing to be done is sinful, and so to be forborne, nor perfectly clear that it is a duty and so to be done: in this case he must weigh the scales, and where the soul apprehends most weight of reason, that way he must incline, though the other scale be not altogether empty. And this, done after humble and diligent search, with bewailing our infirmity that we are no more discerning, will be accepted of God. God puts not his people on necessity of sinning, nor can our scruples dispense with his commands."

N. C. Sometimes I think this is clear and solid reason; but many friends think otherwise, and I am loath to offend them by doing these things which our governors require.

[z] Rom. xiv. 23.

[a] Mr. John Geree's Resolution of Ten Cases, licensed by Mr. Cranford, 1644. [p. 28. quest. 6.]

C. But consider, "First, they may take offence when none is given, and then the fault is their own, and you not chargeable therewith. Secondly, the question is, whether they be offended in respect of what themselves know, or but led by affection, disliking of other men's dislike. Intreat the former to let thee abound, for such things, in thy own sense, and show them that herein you may brotherly disagree: for the latter, inform their judgment if they will yield to reason; if not, then consider, thirdly, whether thou art bound to nourish up such men in their folly, and to respect their partial affection, being more carried away with an overweening of some men's persons, than any thing at all with the right understanding of the cause. And then, fourthly, consider the power of the magistrate, and whether his authority commanding do not take away the offence which might otherwise be given by a voluntary act. And lastly, that a man should not stand more upon avoiding dislike in private persons, than offence to public authority[b]:" as I said before.

But alas! as he saith at the end of his book[c], "Charity and such like graces are far to seek nowadays. Men on all hands judge of things perversely. This they will allow, and that again humorously they will not like. That which may be justly done well without offence, thereat will others be unjustly offended. Things doubtful men take sinisterly; yea, they dare censure what they never saw, condemn as ill what they know not, suspect where they have no cause, gainsay where there ought to be no contradiction; partial to themselves, and rigorous towards others. Authority will rule thus and so, subjects will obey with exceptions. Judgment from the word is not so much a guide, as will and affection in too many are made masters. These be ill days and contentions; unhappy times, in which men either will do that they will do of themselves, or else fall to humour parties, (not simply receiving a love of the truth for the truth's sake,) and so come to partakings, which doth but increase contention, till all come to confusion, except the Lord in his great mercy prevent the same."

N. C. "And turn us all to a more moderate course, and there keep us."

[b] Bern. Counsels of Peace. [p. 17–19.]

[c] Separatists Schism, adjoined to the other. [p. 161.]

C. You have read the book: for those are the words that follow.

N. C. No. But I think there is much of truth in what he says: and it had been well if his counsels had been then followed.

C. Alas! they who were chiefly concerned in them were so far from following them, that they took no further notice of them than only to revile him that wrote them.

N. C. Methinks none should be so brutish.

C. It is as I tell you. Mr. Ainsworth, making an answer to this book, wholly omitted these counsels of peace, save only that he once mentioned them, with this haughty censure, that "perhaps the author knew no more than Caiaphas what he said." Such men will not grant us able to say any good thing.——

N. C. But this was an acknowledgment the things were observable.

C. True, but you see the men of that spirit will not regard excellent things, if they be said by those whom they do not love. Mr. Bernard in his reply I think hath given a true description of them[d]. "Schismatics are headstrong, they will not see evident conviction. Self-love makes them judge the best of themselves, but their want of charity very badly of others. They beguile themselves with shows of piety, heat of affection, and with a strong apprehension of things greatly amiss in others. These they can see with both eyes, themselves with neither. Our arguments against them are paper-shot: but their weakest reasons against us (if themselves may judge) are shot of cannon. They despise every man's endeavour against them, and are in admiration of their own works. Let any man confer with them, and he shall hear it: I myself have sufficient experience of it. All opposing their way are men, in their judgment, that have no grace, rebellious against the light. Thy are presumptuous in censuring, and may give sentence against all men and all churches in the world; but none may give judgment of them. I heartily wish you all less

[d] Preface to Plain Evidences, and Answer to the Fore-speech, as Mr. Ainsworth terms it. Published by authority, 1610. [Cited above, p. 615.]

pride and more humility; less dislike of others, and more charity, with greater dislike of yourselves: the want whereof is the present enemy to lovely unity that ever accompanies true piety; which many pretend, but few truly enjoy." And so farewell.

N. C. Do you hear? pray come back.

C. Will you never have done? what's the matter now?

N. C. I have but one word more. You must not pass too hard a censure upon some ministers who come not to church. You know they cannot appear openly because of the act which forbids them to be in cities, market towns, &c.

C. And yet they are there notwithstanding that act, and kept meetings against another act which was lately in force. Why may they not appear any where in those places as well as in one? in God's house as well as their own or yours? in the face of all the people, as well as before a party separated from the rest? You are a fine advocate indeed: who now have confessed they are more afraid of the punishment (whatsoever they say) than of the sin of disobedience. For they break the law wheresoever they are in those prohibited cities or towns, and they would but break it if they were at church, only it would be less——

N. C. I will stay you no longer. I did not think of this when the other came into my mind.

C. I believe it. You are not wont to lay things together, and then search them to the bottom. But you think as you talk, suddenly, in a rambling manner, without any coherence: which would never trouble me at all, (you may think and speak as you please,) if you were not so conceited of yourselves, as if you were the most knowing people, that must give law and religion to all others.

N. C. There are those can talk as well as you.

C. No doubt of it. Let them therefore endeavour to mend the rest; and remember them of such passages as these in your books, which once they allowed of. "No man endued with right reason, but will say there is a necessity of a government; if of a government, then of uniformity, else it will be confused. Therefore there is a necessity to suppress all conventicles, and that all men should observe such order, time, place, and public gesture, as the parliament (by the advice of the assembly) shall

appoint. And no man that hath any use of conscience in any thing, but will acknowledge he is bound in conscience to obey the laws of the land in which he lives, in all indifferent things: or he is turbulent and deserves censure, even for matters concerning worship. He that hath the use of conscience, will make conscience of the duties of both tables as well as one. There is doubtless a conscience towards God, and a conscience towards man. This was the apostle's practice, and must be our rule; *I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men*[e]." Acts xxiv. 16. Once more farewell.

N. C. I thank you.

[e] An Alarm by way of answer to the last warning-piece, p. 15. Licenced by Mr. John Downam, with this sentence prefixed: *Ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that is born in the land.* [Early in the year 1646, appeared an anonymous pamphlet, "The Last Warning to all the inhabitants of London," written apparently by some violent antinomian or fifth monarchy-man. It has neither title-page, date, nor printer's name, but is entered in the MS. catalogue of the king's pamphlets, in the British Museum, (252) March 20, 164⅝. Edwards, who frequently mentions and quotes it in his Gangræna, published in that year, furnishes the following particulars relating to it. "On the 19th of March, a pamphlet called 'The last warning to all the inhabitants of the city of London,' came abroad in print, which pamphlet speaks against all kingly government, receiving the king in again, and against all established ecclesiasticall government, besides many other dangerous passages in it. Now this book was spread and dispersed up and down by sectaries, as for instance, one Samuel Fulcher, an egge man, rebaptized by one Crab, a felt maker, was the 21 of March examined before a justice of peace, for spreading this book called 'The last warning to London,' and confessed he had sold six or seven of them. One Overton, an Independent bookseller, and a member of Master John Goodman's church, or his man for him, sold many of them to severall persons, as I can prove. One Calvert, a sectary and a bookseller, on Ludgate Hill, sold and dispersed many of these books; and so one Barber, an anabaptist, boasted two dayes after the book came forth, naming this pamphlet, that there was a book come forth had cut the legges of the Presbyterian government, and asked a citizen if he had not seen it."—Gangræna, part ii. p. 9.

The tract referred to by Patrick was composed in reply to this. Its full title is "An Alarum, to the last warning peece to London; by way of answer, discovering the danger of sectaries suffered, and the necessity of order and uniformity to bee established; wherein the Presbyterian way of government, and the Independent liberty is compared:"—4to, Lond. printed for L. Chapman. It is subscribed "George Smith, gent." The same author had put forth in the preceding year another work, with the same object of extolling the covenant, and advocating the enforcement of the entire Presbyterian platform; "England's Pressures, or

the people's complaint, humbly related, for the information, and for satisfaction of the grounds and causes thereof; and communicated to the inhabitants of England in the severall cities and counties of the kingdome:" it also bears the imprimatur of John Downame, and is dated "from my lodging, Fleet St. London, this 31 of Iuly, 1645."

The writer's opinions appear to have followed to some extent the changes of the times in politics and religion; since we find him publishing, under the commonwealth, a vehement and adulatory defence of Cromwell, entitled, "God's Unchangeableness: or God's continued Providence in preserving, governing, ordering, and disposing of all creatures, men, actions, counsels, and things, as at the beginning of the world, so to the end of the world for ever, according to the counsel of his will...Wherein is clearly demonstrated and proved that Oliver Cromwell is by the Providence of God, Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland, &c., to whom the people owe obedience, as to him whom God hath set over them."—4to, Lond. 1654.

Nor is this the only change which may be traced in his sentiments or connections, if we are justified in identifying him with the George Smith, who in the year 1643 is mentioned by Anthony à Wood as one of those assisting archbishop Laud on his trial.—Athen. Oxon. iii. 128.]

END OF VOL. V.

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